

Sam^l Hodges His Book

THE DOCTRINE of THE DIVINE BEING
Under His *Grand Distinguishing Characters* of
GOD, FATHER and SPIRIT.

A SERMON

delivered at *The Meeting House* in
SNOW'S FIELDS, Southwark :

Occasioned

by THE ANNIVERSARY OF

THAT FOUNDATION

on The First of AUGUST

MDCCXXXV.



By *SAYER RUDD*, M. D.

But to US there is but ONE GOD, THE FATHER—
1 Corinth. viii. 6.

Now THE LORD is THAT SPIRIT.

2 Corinth. iii. 17.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near *The Oxford Arms* in *Warwick Lane*; A. DODD, at *The Peacock* without *Temple Bar*; and
J. NOON, at *The White Hart*, near *Mercers Chapel*, in
Cheapside. MDCCXXXVII.

12 (13)

Samuel Hodges

Sum men do say that God is 3 in 1
But I say God is off himself a lone

~~Sum men do say that God is 3 in 1~~

Sum men do say that God is 3 in one
But I say God is off himself a lone

Sum men do say that God is three in one
But I say God is off Himself a lone

John Wright



I TIMOTHY, Ch. II. 5.
THERE IS ONE GOD.



IN my *First Annual Discourse*, for The Year Preceding, Those, who were condescending enough to meet with us, were let into *The Occasion of Our Present Settlement*, for the duties of *Public Worship*; as *A Retreat* to which we were driven by *The Unnatural Usage of Our Brethren of The Particular Baptist Congregations*.

I AM now, in consequence of intimations given at *That Time*, as well as agreeable to *The Plan* by which I design to conduct the Services of *This Day*, to procede with *A General Representation of Our Faith*, as *The Disciples, or Followers of JESUS*. That so, having made it appear, That *Our Religious Principles* are consistent with *The Form of Sound Words*¹, deliver'd in *The Scriptures*, we may farther have it in our power to assert Our Right to All The Privileges of *Good Subjects*, and *Real Christians*.

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As

¹ 2 Tim. i. 13.

As to *The Grand Branches*, of which it will be necessary that *Our Representation* should be made up, they are *Two* only; namely *Our Concerns with The Divine and Mediatorial Beings*.--- For, it is apprehended, That when we have explained ourselves with respect to these *TWO GREAT PERSONAGES*, or given you *An Epitome of Our Faith* in *ONE GOD* and *ONE MEDIATOR*, That, as we shall have answered all *The Intentions* any way relative to *The Happiness of our own Souls* (according to the tenour of *The Divine Law*) so likewise, That we shall have done every thing necessary to vindicate *Our Own Orthodoxy*, and remove *The Suspicions of Our Christian Brethren*.

I MAKE thus free with *The Congregations of the Particular Baptist Persuasion*, because, I would hope, they will, *at last*, learn to despise *That Silly Piece of Ostentation* of being willing to appear *wiser than The Scriptures*,² and will be ashamed to exact *more* at the hands of their fellow creatures, as *A Term of Communion*, than *GOD* himself requires in point of *Eternal Salvation*.--- Does *The Great Oracle of Truth*, in his addresses to *The Divine Majesty*, tell me: *This is Life Eternal, that they might know THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom THOU hast sent?*³ And are *No Other Demands* made upon *The Church* by her Lord and Master, than *These: Ye believe in GOD, believe also in ME?*⁴ And shall not *A Representation of Our Faith on THESE TWO important articles*, such *A Representation*,

² 1 Corinth. iv. 6.

³ John xvii. 31.

⁴ Ibid. xiv. 1.

sentation, as may comport with Scripture, in the several parts of it, be admitted by *The Brethren* above mentioned, as *The Whole* necessary to give *Sanction to Our Principles*, and *Honour to Our Practice* in *The Profession* of them?

I AM then to advance in my present Design, by taking *The Former Branch* of *The Argument* (which strictly confines our thoughts to *THE DIVINE BEING*) under Immediate Consideration. This will furnish us with sufficient Matter for *One Discourse*. And as it has certainly the precedence in *The Order of Nature*, as well as *The Dignity of The Thing*, I intend it as *The Subject* of what I have now to offer; having for this purpose made choice of *The Words* first read, as that *Scripture*, among many others, which is express in *This Great Truth*.

THERE IS ONE GOD.

THE Text, you observe, is *A Proposition* of itself; and is, indeed, *The Most Simple, Unmixt Account*, which we have of *THE DIVINE BEING*.----But as we propose to give you *A General View* of Our Sentiments on *This Important Article*, and lead you thro' *The Scriptural Doctrine of the Godhead*, in *The Principal Advances* it has made, or *The Grand Distinguishing Characters* by which it stands revealed in *The Word*; it will be proper for us, to take into *The Description*, *Two other Divine Titles*, Equally Peculiar to *The First Cause*, I mean those of *FATHER* and *SPIRIT*, or *HOLY GHOST*: Because when *They* are
added

added to *The Character* in Our Text, we shall have *An Intire, Connected View* of THE DIVINE BEING both in *Nature and Grace*; and so complete All The Concerns, which we can be supposed to have with HIM, for *Time and Eternity*.

LET us begin, however, where Our Text does, with *The First, and Most Simple Character* of THE DIVINE BEING: *There is*

O N E G O D.

Now here, that I may procede with Some Regularity, it will be proper for me to open with *A Short Paraphrase or Comment* on *This Proposition*, in order to give You *The Amount* of the Passage, or lead you into *The Full Import* of The Word GOD in our use of *That Term*.

WHEREFORE, when I affirm, after *The Apostle* in the language of Our Text, *That there is but ONE GOD*, I would be understood to mean, That there is only One First, Eternal Existent; One Necessary, Independent Being; One Infinite Conscious Mind, Intelligent Agent or Person; The Greatest, Wisest and Best: ONE GOD, The Creator of All Things; The Sovereign Proprietor and Disposer of All His Works; The Righteous Governour and Judge of All His Intellectual Creatures; and the Supreme Object of All Religious Adoration and Worship.

I HAVE taken *This Compass* in The Present Description of THE DIVINE BEING, as *A Proper Explication* of Our Text, not only, because

because I apprehend *The Nature of The Subject* expressly requires it; but because I would *stop The Mouths* of those in *The Popular Scheme*, and convince them, that my principles will admit me to speak of THE DIVINE BEING in *The Utmost Latitude*.----It has been objected, and, for what I know, there may have been Reason enough for it, That some have been fond of *contracting Their Notion* of the Word GOD, and would confine it, truly, to *The Sole Ideas* of *Sovereignty, Dominion* or *Government*, as the best means to secure *A Private, Favourite Hypothesis*.⁵----Let those retain *That Interpretation*, who want it: For my own part, I think myself obliged, at the same time, that I acknowledge THE DIVINE BEING, or ONE GOD to possess *Sovereign Dominion*, to acknowledge also, that he is *The Creator, Governour, and Judge of all; The Greatest, Wisest, and Best of all Beings*: And farther, That he is, to all his intellectual creatures, *The Supreme Object of Their Religious Adoration and Worship*. And all this, for what I see at present, is no more than *A Natural Consequence* of *This First General Account of GODHEAD*, necessarily included in the very ideas of *Sovereignty and Dominion*. And whatever *Injury* such A Concession may carry with it to *Other Schemes*, I am very confident, it has nothing in it *Detrimental* to mine.

To what has been now said, by way of *Farther Explication*, bear with me, if I subjoin: That *This Proposition*, together with *The Comment*

⁵See Dr. WATTS'S *Christian Doctrine* of THE TRINITY, p. 22.

Comment upon it, being founded in *Nature*, we may venture *Their Whole Evidence*, or *Demonstration* upon that bottom.---In this part of *The Argument* (as I have already observed) we have to do with *THE DIVINE MAJESTY* in *His most Naked, Simple Form of Exhibition*; under His Character of *Natural Excellence* and *Dominion*, bespeaking *The Dignity of His Nature* and *The Extent of His Government*: And therefore, when *THE DIVINE BEING* reveals Himself under *The Simple Character of GOD*, or *Those of THE GREAT GOD*,⁶ *THE MIGHTY GOD*,⁷ and the like; for leading us into an acquaintance with Himself, in *This Form of Manifestation*, and securing *The Acknowledgements* necessarily connected with *Those Characters*, He seems, as it were, barely to appeal, Either, *To The External Evidence*, which arises from *The Works* of His Hands; because we cannot know, that He *created* all things, but must likewise see, that He is *The Fountain of Being*; nor that He was *before* all things, but must, for that reason conclude, that He is *Eternal*: Or else, *To The Inward Witness*, which every man bears to *This Great Truth* in his own Breast; because the creature cannot possess any *Intellectual Powers*, but he must be *conscious*, that he derived them from *ONE*, who is *Necessarily Existent*, and *Infinitely Perfect*: Neither can he, in the least, enter into *The Relation or Dependance of Things*, without inferring from *Those Principles*, that it is most highly reasonable, that he should *Love* and

⁶ Deut. x. 17. ⁷ Nehem. ix. 32. Rev. xix. 17. &c.

and Serve that *First and Supreme Cause*.---All *The Use* I have farther to make of what has been now suggested, is, That as it appears from hence, that *This Branch* of The Subject lies intirely within the verge of *Natural Sense* and *Sound Reasoning*, so All that I shall attempt under *This Proposition*, will be *The Establishment* of it upon *Natural Principles*, or by The Sole Force of *Rational Arguments*.---Only with *This Particular Difference* from what is common in handling This Doctrine (as will be observed from The Very Form in which I have laid down *The Explication* of The Word God) That I shall indeavour to make it appear, that This One, *Self Existent, Eternal Being* is Such, in *Distinction* from, and *Opposition* to *All Other Divine Equals*; that He is *Originally, Separately*, and *Solely* The Whole that Our *Paraphrase* represents Him to be; and that there can be *No Other distinct, intelligent Being*, or *Hypostasis*, in *The Same Sense*, from *The Same Spring*, and to *The Same Perfection*, intituled to *The several Attributions* by which he is here distinguished. My next Business then is

THE PROOF
of The Argument in its present State.

I. Now *The First Reason*, with which I design to entertain you in Maintenance of *The Doctrine* before us, shall be drawn from *The Explication* itself; *The Definition* I have already given of THE DIVINE BEING under The Character of God. And from thence I argue after this manner: *That Being*, who is

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Eternal,

Eternal, Self Existent, Necessary and Independent, must be GOD, because it is impossible to conceive of DEITY, without the admission of *Those Properties*: And He must be but ONE, because *Attributions of That Kind* cannot subsist in Two, or *More Distinct Subjects*. ---Again: He, who is *Infinitely Conscious and Intelligent, Infinitely Great, Wise and Good*, must be GOD, because *Such An Exuberance of Perfection* is inseparable from *The First Notions of DIVINITY*: And He must be but ONE, because *That Being* who is *Consummately Wise, Good and Powerful*, or, in other words, *Infinitely Perfect*, must exclude every *Competitor or Equal*. *Whatsoever Person or Agent* is *Infinite* with respect to *Any Perfection or Attribute*, must, for that reason, stand *unrivalled* in *The Character of GODHEAD*, because such *An Infinitude* not only makes every *Equal* in *Those Perfections, Unnecessary*, but utterly *Impossible*. ---Once more, *That Being, Intelligent Agent, or Person* (call Him as you please) who *made All Things*, must be GOD, because *Creative Power* is, on all sides, acknowledged *The Glorious Peculiar* of *THE DIVINE BEING*: And He must be but ONE, because He could not *create All Things*, if there was yet, besides *Himself, Another Eternal, Co-Operative Cause*. But who sees not *The Absurdity* of such a Supposition? Because, as *His creating All Things* necessarily supposes, whatever has been observed of Him *above*; so it is very evident, that *The Eternity of his Existence*, and *The Absolute Perfection of His Nature*, forever shut out *All Co-Eternals*.

Co-Eternals and Co-Equals; and by consequence, *Every Thing*, which might be supposed to bear *Joint Part* with Him in the work of *Creation*. He was *Equal* to it *Himself*, therefore what *Assist*ant could He want? He *actually performed* it *Himself*, where then is the room left for *A Second*? ---- I add, *Whoever* is *The Sovereign Proprietor and Disposer of All Things*, *The Righteous Governour and Judge* of all His Intellectual Creatures, must be *GOD*, because *An Interest and Dominion of This Kind* are *Proper* to *The Nature and Constitution of DIVINITY*: And He must be but *ONE*, because (separate from *The Confusion*, which would otherwise follow) *Sovereignty of Dominion*, including *All Power, Rectoral and Judicial*, is not *Divisible*; cannot be *distributed* to *A Second* or *Third Being*.---In one word, *Whatever Being* or *Agent* is *The Supreme Object of All Religious Adoration or Worship*, must be *GOD*, not only, because *No Subordinate Being* can lay claim to *Such Homage*; but also, because it would be incompatible with *The Character of A Creature* to pay it *else where*: And He must be but *ONE*, because *The Supremacy in These Points, The First Right to All Acts of Love and Devotion*, will forever exclude *The Intervention of Any Partner or Equal*.

It is in *This View* of Things, and upon *This Train of Reasoning*, That I have been so often surprised, at that *Strange Run of Expression*, that *Confused Jumble of words*, which we meet with in *The Creed*, commonly, tho' very *unjustly*, saddled, upon That Old Father, St.

Atbanafius. What *A Noise* and *Rumble* does it make: *Such as The Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.* As how? It follows: *The Father uncreate, The Son uncreate, and The Holy Ghost uncreate* (tho', by the way, They are not ashamed to own, That *The One is Begotten*, and That *The Other Proceeds*) *The Father incomprehensible, The Son incomprehensible, and The Holy Ghost incomprehensible; The Father Eternal, The Son Eternal, and The Holy Ghost Eternal.* And again: So likewise *The Father is Almighty, The Son is Almighty, and The Holy Ghost is Almighty*, with the rest.---- What *Contradictions* and *Absurdities* are here? That there should be *THREE* equally possessed of *All Divine Glory, All Infinite Perfection*, when *DIVINITY*, in the sense of Our Text, if that be right, can belong but to *ONE*; when *Infinite of Perfection* in *ONE* necessarily excludes the residence of it in *Another*.---It is true The Great Author, whoever he be, would willingly compound the matter with his followers, or rather close their eyes against his Profound Ignorance, by denying, in the next words, what he asserts in the foregoing: *And yet* (says he) *there are not THREE ETERNALS, but ONE ETERNAL; as also, there are not THREE ALMIGHTIES, but ONE ALMIGHTY: and so on.* But to what purpose is this, unless it be to add *Contradiction to Contradiction*, and heap *One Incomprehensible* upon the back of *Another*?---The Argument, beyond all dispute, is strongly against Them: If *Eternity* and *Self Existence; Necessity* and *Independence of Being; Infinite*

Infinite Goodness, Wisdom and Power; Creation and Providence; The Future Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, as well as The Present Supreme Claim to Religious Adoration, be The Peculiar of THE DIVINE BEING, He must certainly be but ONE in Distinction from, and Opposition to All Others; because Attributions, Works and Demands of This Kind cannot admit of Equals or Partners, in any consistency either with The Use of Words, or, which is much more, The Relation and Nature of Things.

II. To what has been offered above, on this *First Branch* of The Argument, I have only to add farther, That there is Sufficient Reason to conclude for the doctrine of DIVINE UNITY, in Our Sense of the word, and to object against *The Common Trinitarian Hypothesis*, because *The Grand Design of Scripture*, in its Representations of THE DEITY, is not to describe *The Metaphysical Nature of God*, but to exhibit *His Concern in The Great Affair of Salvation*.²

---- It is very easy to observe, That when Our Brethren contend so warmly for *A Trinity of Persons* under the terms of FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, as descriptive of THE ONE GOD, what they dispute for is rather *A Metaphysical*, than *A Theological Account* of THE DIVINE BEING. In this case, they regard Him more in *His Abstract Nature, or Modal Existence*, than as to *The Part* which He takes, or *The Interest*

² For this argument, and the much greater part of the enlargement under it, I am indebted to A MS. of my brother, Mr. John Rudd.

Interest He bears in the work of *Redemption*.— But is it to be imagined, That this is *The Grand, or Primary Design* of *Revelation*, when it speaks of THE SUPREME BEING, or represents HIM, together with THE MEDIATOR, under *Those Personal Characters*? By no means. This is neither *The Design of Scripture*, nor does *Scripture treat things in this way*. It was never calculated to make us *Philosophers* or *Mathematicians*, but *Believers* and *Christians*. And therefore, where *The Scriptures* are concerned with *The Mundane System*, whether as to *The Heavens* above us, or *This Earth*, which we inhabit, and our interest does not depend upon *The Knowledge* of things in *Their Philosophical Nature*, *The Great God* has been pleased to accommodate *His Language* to *The Conceptions* of *The Bulk* of the people, to whom He at first delivered Himself. (And we shall see hereafter, that the case is very much the same with respect to *Those Personal Characters*.) *The Descriptions* are taken from *The Obvious Appearances* of things to *Natural Sense*, and are always found to comport with *The Notions generally received* in *The World*. Thus *The Scriptures* speak Of *The Motion of the Sun*,¹ *The Foundations of The Earth*,² *The Pillars of Heaven*,³ and the like: Not that these accounts are *Litterally* or *Philosophically True*, but only instances of *Condescension* to *The General Notions* of Mankind.

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¹ Psal. xix. 5, 6. Joshua x. 12, 13, &c.
² Psal. civ. 5, &c.

³ Job xxvi. 11.

⁴ Job xxxviii. 4.

NOR is it to be wondered at, in the least, That, respecting *These Things*, *The Scripture* should procede in *This Manner*, because, as was said before, it was given with *A Design* very contrary to what is *Philosophical*, namely, to represent The Concerns of GOD and CHRIST with *The Fallen Creature*; *The Relations* They bear, *The Compass* They take, and *The Methods* They use to execute *The Glorious Scheme of Salvation*.---That this is *Fact* is evident from hence, That *otherwise The Necessity of Revelation would have been superseded*.---As to *The Existence of A First Cause*, or That there is A GOD, and that He is clothed with *Infinite Power and Majesty*; that is *The Great Principle of Natural Religion*: And enough of it had been *clearly seen*, and *understood by The Things which are made*.¹ This is no more than what *Adam* knew in *A State of Innocency*, and what we might *All* have known from *The Light of Nature*. But considering us as *Fallen, Vitiated Creatures*, something more was *Necessary*, than *the bare knowledge of God in His Being or Essence*, namely, That *He* was filled with *such Grace*, and clothed with *such Power* as were proper to ingage Him in, and render Him equal to *Our Recovery*.---If This Observation be *just*, as I cannot but conclude, it is then very manifest, That *The Trinitarians injure and degrade Scripture*, by applying The Characters of FATHER, SON and SPIRIT to so many *Personal Distinctions* in THE GOD-HEAD; and supposing, That *such a number of* Real

¹ Rom. i. 20.

Real Persons enter into The Composition of THE DIVINE NATURE or ESSENCE: Because this is turning *Scripture* into *A Dry, Metaphysical Lecture*, instead of leading us to consider *Those Characters* as *A New Testament Description* of THE ONE GOD and ONE MEDIATOR; and as such suggesting, that THEY are of *The Greatest Spiritual Extent*, and, in fact, include nothing less, than *The Whole Scheme of Salvation*.--- Add to this, That, besides that *The Scriptures*, upon *The Common Plan of Three Divine Persons*, would lose much of *Their Lustre*; *The Believer* likewise, would suffer much in *His Comfort*. For of what consequence would it be to him, as A Fallen Creature, to know (supposing it were true) That there are THREE in The Composition of THE DIVINE BEING, or That THREE enter into *His Modal Existence*? He might know *This*, and yet *perish*. Whereas it is of *Infinite Weight* and *Advantage* for him to know, That *Those Characters* are inclusive of The Most Valuable *Relations* and *Capacities*, which GOD and THE MEDIATOR stand in to him, as jointly concerned in the affair of *Salvation*. Here there appears something *worthy* THE DIVINE BEING; something suited to *The Necessity* of The Fallen Creature; Strokes of *Infinite Wisdom* and *Contrivance*; Traces of *Divine Tendernefs* and *Compassion*. Whereas upon The Other System *Revelation* appears on no better foot than *Natural Religion*: The Creature is no better off, in point of *Security* and *Comfort*, now he is told, That there are
THREE

THREE in *The Divine Nature*, than he would have been, had he still looked upon *The Supreme Cause* as ONE *Individual Person*.

WHAT, think you, is the foundation of that triumph which breaks from *The Prophet* in the Person of *The Church*? Who is A GOD like unto THEE?---What does he mean? Does he speak thus of GOD barely in *Distinction* from *The Idols* of the heathen, or barely with regard to *His Metaphysical Nature* or *Essence*? Neither. But as he had been pleased to interpose in the work of *Salvation*. This appears from *The Manner* in which *The Prophet* explains himself in the following words: *That pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? that retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*¹ All which Glorious Blessings immediately present themselves to view, when we consider *The Personal Characters* applied TO GOD and THE MEDIATOR upon the foot of *True Unitarianism*.

NOR need it affect any, That *Revelation*, in its General Tenour, is pointed this way, since *A Philosophical Acquaintance* with GOD, in *His Divine Nature* or *Essence*, is, perhaps, too raised for Our Conceptions while in the body: Or however, since it does not appear, how This barely would answer Any Valuable Purposes to us, either to *meliorate Our Tempers*, *regulate Our Manners*, or *promote Our Eternal Welfare*. On the contrary, I cannot but think, That we have The Highest Reason to

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rejoice.

¹ Micah vii. 18.

rejoice that *Revelation* is otherwise employed; since Every Thing that could be proposed upon *The Trinitarian Theory*, nay, that which is infinitely more, than knowing God in His Private Substance or Abstract Nature, is abundantly overballanced from An Experimental Acquaintance with GOD and THE MEDIATOR in The Several Relations They bear, and The Different Capacities They act in for Our Salvation.

To conclude therefore in *The Particular* before us: It is very evident, we have but Two Ways to settle our notions in *This Article*, namely *Reason* and *Scripture*. The latter, as appears from what has been said under this head, absolutely deserts us: *Revelation* knows Nothing of *Trinitarianism* in its present Scholastic Dress. What Course then are we to take? What Expedient is to be used? Shall we offer Violence to *Scripture*? Shall we force it out of its Natural Channel, and torture it to speak words it never intended? ---- Such Methods, indeed, may be Necessary for Those in *The Vulgar Scheme*, but cannot but be abhorred by Every Honest, Impartial Inquirer after Truth. --- No it is plain, That as we are driven from *Revelation* in This Point, and forced upon the conduct of Right Reason and Sound Philosophy; so that we take Sanctuary here; that we regard it as An Oracle in The Present Controversy: And that, as it appears to be The Perpetual Dictate of Natural Light, That DIVINITY is Numerically ONE, so, of consequence, that we reject The Popular Theory of Three Divine Equals,

Equals, and acknowledge, as *A Genuine Effect* of *Rational Conviction*, That THE DIVINE BEING is, what I have all along represented Him to be, I mean, ONE *Infinite Conscious Mind*, ONE *Intelligent Agent*, or *Spirit*.

I HAVE now gone thro', what I designed upon *The First Divine Title*, namely That of GOD; *The Title* under which THE DIVINE BEING is spoken of in our text: And am therefore, in the next place, by *The Order* proposed in our entrance on *This Subject*, to attend The Consideration of *The Second Character*, by which THE ONE GOD stands represented in *Scripture*, which is That of

F A T H E R.

NOW FATHER is not A Character of *Personal Distinction* in *The Nature* or *Substance* of THE GODHEAD; but is barely A Character of *Relation*: Either, First, in *A Natural Way*, as it suggests *The Capacity*, which THE ONE GOD stands in to *The Whole System of Beings*, with respect to *Creation*, *Providence*, and *Government*: Or Else, Secondly, in *A Spiritual Way*, as it regards CHRIST and *The Church*, and so intimates, both *The Nearness* of THE DIVINE BEING to Them, and *His Concern* for Them, under *That Character*.---FATHER is not *The Title* of ONE *Individual*, *Intelligent Agent*, in *Distinction* from, or *Opposition* to Two other, *Eternally subsisting* in *The Divine Essence* (which is The Popular Notion of the word) but is *Another Character* of THE ONE *Eternal*, *Unoriginated Being*; The Same *Intelligent*

ligent Agent or Spirit, as was before described by The Sovereign Title of GOD. And as *That* was principally designed to exhibit THE DIVINE BEING, in His Pure Character of *Natural Relation*, and by that means give us *The Most Naked, and Distant Ideas* of GODHEAD; so *This*, as *An Agreeable Advance* upon it, not only brings Him *nearer* to us, even in point of *Natural Capacity*, under the Character of *A Common Parent*; but with respect to *Revelation* (which is to be considered as particularly interested in *This Character*) holds Him forth in *The Most Amiable, Indearing Light*, First, as THE FATHER of CHRIST, and Then, as OUR FATHER in and thro' Him.

THE PROOF.

AFTER *This Brief Explication* of *The Paternal Character*, as applicable to THE DIVINE BEING, what I am here concerned to evince, is,

I. THAT FATHER is *Another* Character of THE DIVINE BEING; Or, That *The Same Person*, who is at one time described under The Title of GOD, is at another time described under The Title of FATHER. And

II. THAT whether THE DIVINE BEING is represented by *The Paternal* or *Absolute Character*, He is still no more than ONE *Intelligent Agent* or *Person*.

As to the former of these, namely

I. THAT GOD and FATHER are *Equally* Characters of ONE and THE SAME DIVINE BEING.

BEING, please to take the following Reasons :

1. BECAUSE if we regard The Character of FATHER barely in *A Natural Way*, we shall find it exactly answers *All The Ideas*, which enter *The Composition* of the word, God : Only with *An Agreeable Rise* in point of *Love* and *Tenderness*, *Care* and *Provision*.-----Why does THE DIVINE BEING appear described to us by The Character of GOD, but because He is *The Creator* of All Things ; *The Sovereign Proprietor* of All His Works, *The Righteous Governour* and *Judge* of His Intellectual Creatures, and, for that reason, *The Person* intitled to *their Religious Homage* or *Worship*?----Upon *The Same Accounts*, and for *The Same Reasons*, only, as I said before, *raising Our Apprehension on These Heads*, *softening* and *indearing Those Views*, is THE DIVINE BEING represented to us under The Title of A FATHER. Let us but consider Him as *Our Common Parent*, which he certainly is, and we shall not only be convinced, That the several things now before mentioned meet in *The First Cause*, but also confess, That The Characters of FATHER and GOD necessarily belong to *The Same Intelligent Agent* or *Infinite Spirit*. Add to this

2. THAT the Matter in question will admit of Evidence from *Express Testimony of Scripture*, where *This Application* is made for us. Those terms GOD and FATHER stand connected in *Revelation*, as an Indisputable Proof, that *They center in ONE* and THE SAME DIVINE BEING. For example: We read of THE
GOD

GOD and FATHER of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.¹ And likewise of GOD OUR FATHER:² To intimate not only, That The Characters reside in *The Same Subject*, but that (excepting only The Difference before observed) They take Their Rise from *The Same Spring*. Nay what is rather more exprefs, because The Characters seem to be used as *Explanations* of each other, we read almost without End in *The New Testament*, of GOD THE FATHER.³ And farther of GOD *even* THE FATHER; As in that passage: *To the acknowledgement of the mystery of GOD, even THE FATHER.*⁴ With a Variety of Places, where the copulative AND *may*, and *ought* to be rendered by the particle *Even*. And if this be not plain enough, we have, moreover, such Expressions as these: GOD THE FATHER of *All.*⁵ Nay, and ONE GOD, THE FATHER of *all things.*⁶ If it be possible for Scripture to explain The Character of GOD, and settle *The Application of the Paternal Title*, These Passages will effectually do it; it being very evident from hence, That THE SAME DIVINE BEING stands *indifferently* described by *Each of These Names*. *The Contents of Both Characters* are united in *The Same individual*. He, who was THE GOD and FATHER of *The Head*, is also THE GOD and FATHER of *The whole Body*: Only as *His Goodness, Wisdom, and Power* were not *so fully, or immediately*

¹ Eph. i. 3. and 2 Cor. xi. 31. ² Rom. i. 7. Eph. iv. 10. and 1 Thess. i. 3. ³ 1 Cor. xv. 24. Gal. i. 1. and 3. Eph. vi. 23. Phil. ii. 11. Col. i. 3, &c. ⁴ Colos. ii. 2. ⁵ Eph. iv. 6. ⁶ 1 Cor. viii. 6.

ately conspicuous under *The First Character*, he was pleased, in Great Condescension, to afford us *A Brighter Edition* of *Them* under *The Second*. And, indeed, not satisfied to give us barely *A View* of *Those Perfections* in *A Natural Way* (of which kind are *The First Hints* of *Both Titles*) He has especially heightened *The Paternal Character*, by crowding into it Every Thing *Gracious* and *Spiritual*. So that if we can behold Him, as *The Greatest, Wisest, and Best of Beings*, under *His Natural Character of Dominion*; no wonder we acknowledge his Claim to *Those Titles* under *The Endearing Appellation* of A FATHER, as that which involves in it All the Blessings of *Earth and Heaven, of Time, and Eternity*.

As to *The Other Requisite* under this head, which is

II. To make it appear, That THE DIVINE BEING is *The Same Numerical Essence, Hypostasis* or *Person* under *The Paternal*, as He is under *The other Character* of *Absolute Dominion*: I have to observe,

I. THAT *This* immediately arises from what has been *already* suggested upon *The Subject*: If GOD and FATHER are Characters expressive of *The Same Individual Being*, then for *The Same Reasons*, that there is but ONE GOD, for *Those Reasons* likewise can there be but ONE FATHER. Or, which is the same in Other Words: If *Both these Characters* center in *The Same Being*, and it has been proved, beyond Contradiction, That *that Being* is absolutely *One*, it follows by undeniable Consequence,

quence, That whether *That Being* is described by *Those* of GOD and FATHER, or by a *Greater Variety* of Character, that He is, however, still *The Same Numerical Essence, Intelligent Agent or Person*. Not but I have also to add, least *This* should be thought leaving the Matter too open,

2. THAT what I am here contending for is abundantly clear, In That THE FATHER or ONE GOD and THE MEDIATOR are constantly set in *Opposition to Each Other* thro' The Whole of *Revelation*.--- The Argument here is manifestly this: THE DIVINE BEING can be but *One Intelligent Agent or Spirit*, considered under The Character of FATHER, as well as under the Character of GOD, because, even with respect to *The Paternal Character* as well as *That of Absolute Sovereignty*, there is *A Direct Opposition* between THE DIVINE and MEDIATORIAL BEINGS in *Scripture*.---- Nothing can be more express to *The Former Part* of *This Observation*, than what *The Apostle* says: *There be that are called gods (as there be gods many, and lords many) But to us there is but ONE GOD, THE FATHER, and ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST.*⁷ To which we may add, as *A Parallel Account*, those words of *St. Paul* in *Another Epistle*: *To The Acknowledgment of The Mystery of GOD, and of THE FATHER, and of CHRIST.*⁸ Or (as it ought to have been read) *Of GOD THE FATHER, Or at least, Of GOD even THE FATHER, and of CHRIST.* [*The Division or Distance, which is here made* First

⁷ 1 Cor. viii. 5.

⁸ Colos. ii. 2.

First by *The Comma* after the word GOD, and then by *The Infertion* of The Particle *And*, is only *An Orthodox Fetch* in favour of *Trinitarianism*, having neither Foundation in *This Place*, nor *Any Other Part* of *Revelation*, where GOD and FATHER stand connected.] But to The Question before us: In the passages now produced, we find THE DIVINE BEING represented under *Both Characters*, *The Absolute* and *Paternal*, and as such He is not only expressly said to be ONE, but manifestly *Opposed* to CHRIST, THE MEDIATORIAL BEING, to intimate, without doubt, That *His Unity* is of *The Same Kind*, and to be explained in *The Same Way*, with *The Unity* of THE MEDIATOR.---As to what regards *The Latter Part* of The Argument, those words of OUR LORD are intirely full, where He says: *This is Life Eternal, that they might know THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom THOU hast sent.*¹ To which I must not forget to subjoin *The Verse* where Our Text is: *There is ONE GOD, and ONE MEDIATOR between GOD and MEN, The Man CHRIST JESUS.* Now tho' *The Opposition* here, as to *Expression*, lies only between THE MEDIATOR and DIVINE BEING, under *His Natural Character* of GOD; yet, forasmuch as GOD and FATHER are *indifferently Characters* of THE SAME DIVINE BEING, and we may warrantably *supply The Paternal Character* from Other Texts, or *add it to The Natural Title* of GOD; nay explain *The One*

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¹ John xvii. 3.

by *The Other*, as appears from what has been already offered under this head ; it will be evidently seen, That it makes equally in support of what I have here advanced.---Let us then only inquire upon the foot of *These Scriptures* in Conjunction, What is *The Just and Natural Inference* to be drawn from Them ? And it is impossible not to observe, That it can be *No Other* than *This*, That as THE MEDIATORIAL BEING is but ONE *Personally*, and not *One Mediatorial Essence* and *Two*, or *Three Mediatorial Persons* ; so neither is THE DIVINE BEING, who is set in *Direct Opposition* to Him, sometimes under The Character of FATHER, and sometimes under The Character of GOD, any more than *One Intelligent Agent* or *Person*.---That *Plain, Undisguised Parallel, That Full, Blank Comparison*, which is here made ~~between~~ *between* Them, cannot but lead us into *A Conclusion* of this nature. There is ONE MEDIATOR ; What is That ? Why, ONE MEDIATORIAL BEING or *Person*, The Medium of All Worship. And farther, There is also ONE GOD, THE FATHER of All ; What is That ? Surely, Not *Three Divine Persons* (of whom each is The Object of Worship) because such An Exposition would produce *A Monstrous Disproportion* and *Incongruity* in The *Opposition*, which is nevertheless perfectly *Familiar* and *Easy* in *The Bare Words Themselves* ; But ONE DIVINE PERSON, *One Infinite, Conscious Mind*, who under The Characters of FATHER and GOD stands *Opposed* to THE MEDIATOR, and who, without The Precise Consideration

Between
Between

Consideration either of SON, or SPIRIT, as *A Second and Third Equal* in DEITY, is *The Supreme Object* of Worship, and Sufficient to All The Purposes of Grace here, and *Happiness* hereafter.

I HAVE before me, collected by my brother, and self, partly from *The Sacred Writings*, and partly from *The Principles of Natural Reason*, A Variety of Arguments in Maintenance of *Personal Divine Unity*: But as the limits of *A Single Discourse* will by no means admit of such Extensive Inlargment, and *The Nature* of The Subject in *This Branch* of it, does not, *at present*, so strictly require it; I pass to *The Third Character*, under which I have proposed to consider THE DIVINE BEING, namely, That of SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST. And here as my principles strongly militate against *The Prevailing Hypotheses* of the day, as well *Arian*, as *Trinitarian*, and I can therefore expect *Credit* no farther, than it appears, That I have *The Evidence* of *Scripture* to support me, I shall think myself particularly concerned to be full in stating my Sentiments, and entering my Proofs on this Head.

SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST.

THIS is *Another Leading Character* of *The First, Self Existent Being*, equally *Peculiar* to *Him*, with *Those* of GOD and FATHER; and if considered in its *Full Compass*, may be taken *Either* in *A Philosophical*, Or *A Theological Sense*. In *The Former View* it is admirably suited to express *The Private Nature* of THE

DIVINE MAJESTY, as He is *A Spiritual Substance*; the consideration of which properly belongs to *Metaphysics*. But in *The Latter* (with which we are more immediately concerned, as it is *A Character of Revealed Religion*) SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST is designed to suggest, That THE DIVINE BEING, with respect to *Salvation*, operates in *A Manner Agreeable to Himself*, that is to say, *Spiritually*; by which I mean, *Invisibly* and *Powerfully*.---From hence therefore it appears, That the word SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST, as applicable to DIVINITY, is not used to represent *A Second Superior Creature*, nor *A Bare Property* or *Attribute of Power* in God (the senses in which some understand it) nor yet *A Third Divine Substance* or *Hypostasis* in THE ONE GOD, proceeding from *Two Other Subsistencies* (which is *The Popular System*) But is, in fact, designed to exhibit *The Divine Being Himself*, as much as *The Other Characters* here before mentioned, or *Any* descriptive of Him in *The Bible*: Only that, as *The Former* of Those Characters includes, *more especially*, *His Natural Dominion*, and *The Perfections* connected with it; and *The Other* (if *strictly confined* to *The Methods of Our Recovery*) *His Gracious Relation*, with *The Love* and *the rest* laid up in *That Title*: So SPIRIT, or HOLY GHOST, describes THE DIVINE BEING in *His Operative Character*; suggesting The Concerns which *The Same Individual*, *The Same Divine Agent* or *Person*, has in carrying on the work of *Salvation*, by acting upon us after *A Spiritual*,

tual, h. e. *A Secret and Powerful Manner*, as a means to quicken us from our death in Sin, imprinciple our minds with Grace, and prepare us for *The Injoyment of Heaven*.

THE PROOF.

IN Defence of *This Part of Unitarianism*, in Our State of it, besides The Reserve of *A Greater Number*, equally conclusive, I shall, at present, entertain you with *The Reasons following* :

I. *Our Explication* of the word SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST will appear to be genuine, if it be considered, That THE ONE GOD, even THE FATHER of all, is expressly described by *Those Characters in The Sacred Oracles*. This will, in part, approve itself from those words of OUR LORD: GOD IS A SPIRIT.¹---Without doubt, will it be said by *Our Trinitarian Brethren* : This is A Very Proper Description of *His Metaphysical Nature or Substance* : By this will we readily abide.---Agreed : We are too much *Their Friends* to envy Them the possession of *Any Part of Truth*, where They appear to have gotten it by *The Right End*. But, at the same, I hope, we shall not be thought *too forward*, considering *The Importance* of The Question, if we should take The Liberty of asking : Will it not be *Convenient* to look after *The Application of This Word*, and examine by *Which of The Personal Distinctions* it is explained in *The Context*?---The Demand is *too reasonable* to meet with *Opposition* :

¹ John iv. 24.

tion: And therefore we may see, what OUR LORD says to it in some of the preceding verses: JESUS saith unto her, woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship THE FATHER.---But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship THE FATHER in spirit and truth: for THE FATHER seeketh such to worship HIM.² How so? Because, as it follows in the next words, GOD IS A SPIRIT, and they that worship HIM, must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Can we be any longer at a loss for *The Sense and Application* of the word? If *Scripture* be *The Best Interpreter* of itself, as it certainly is, Those must have very little penetration, who cannot discover, That what is here called THE SPIRIT in one verse, is also called THE FATHER in another: And therefore That THE SAME GOD is equally exhibited, as The Object of Worship, under *Both Characters*: And likewise, That THE FATHER is here mentioned by OUR LORD, under *The Title* of SPIRIT, for This Particular Reason, That He will be worshiped in spirit and in truth. We must resign the character of *Intelligent creatures*, to want Any Thing more positive than This.---But then farther, in perfect agreement with *The Other Part* of This Observation, we read in *The Acts of The Apostles* of lying to THE HOLY GHOST. The words of St. Peter to Ananias: *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to THE HOLY GHOST?*³---But who is THIS

² John iv. 21, 23.

³ Acts v. 3.

THIS HOLY GHOST? *A Third Personal Distinction* in THE GODHEAD? No: If we will take *The Apostle's* account, it is *lying to GOD*. For he says, explaining himself in the next verse: *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto GOD.*⁴---True, say *The Trinitarians*, to intimate That THE HOLY GHOST or SPIRIT is GOD.---That is out of the question *with us*. But is That *The Only Reason*? No certainly, if we have yet condescension enough to allow Scripture to speak for itself; but also to acquaint us, That GOD and HOLY GHOST are *The Same Individual* in DEITY; that there is *No Distinction* between *Them*, but what is *Nominal*; that lying to THE HOLY GHOST is lying to GOD, *The One Eternal, unoriginated Being*. This is *The Natural, Unforced Interpretation* of the place. From whence we cannot but see, That GOD and THE HOLY GHOST are so far from being *Two Distinct Persons, Two Real Hypostases* in *The Same Divine Essence*; that They are, indeed, No Other than *Two Leading Names* by which *The One Eternal Existent*, even THE FATHER of All Things, is described in *Revelation*. Again,

II. ANOTHER Argument in support of *Our Doctrine* may be this: That These Terms GOD and SPIRIT are *indifferently or promiscuously* used in *Scripture* for *The Same Intelligent Agent or Being*, and are not applied to *Distinct or Separate Persons* in THE GODHEAD, such as *A First* and *A Third*.---The Reason of This Observation will be presently seen, when I have

⁴ Acts v. 4.

have laid before you the words of *The Apostle* to *The Corinthians*, where he says: *Know ye not, that ye are the temple of GOD, and that THE SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you.*⁵ Here it cannot be improper to ask *Such Questions* as *These*: Were *The Corinthians* the temple of *The First Person*, and yet inhabited by *Another*, h. e. *A Third*? Or did not *The Same Individual Hypostasis*, whose temple they were, actually dwell in *Them*, after *A Spiritual Manner*? The Answer, I apprehend, is abundantly plain from *The Natural Run* of the expressions, and *Obvious Construction* of the words, as they lie in *The Text*. However, to put it beyond all doubt, we need only consult *The Next Verse*, where *The Apostle* uses the word *GOD* no less than *three times*, to let us know, That he had *The Same Divine Person* in view under *Both Characters*: *If any man, says he, defile the temple of GOD, him shall GOD destroy: for the temple of GOD is holy, which temple ye are.*⁶ Who cannot see by comparing *These Verses* together, That by *THE SPIRIT* here mentioned, he intends *No Other* than *THE ONE GOD*, whose temple, as he says once and again, they were, and who dwelt in them by *His Spiritual Influence or Power*.----
 OUR LORD, long before, gave His Disciples the same account concerning *THE SPIRIT*, telling Them, *That He both dwelt with Them, and should be in Them*. His words are these: *I will pray THE FATHER, and He shall give you Another Comforter, Even THE SPIRIT of Truth,*

⁵ 1 Cor. iii. 16.

⁶ Ibid. ver. 17.

*Truth, whom the world cannot receive; but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*⁷—Who is This HE? *The Being described after This Personal Manner?* THIS SPIRIT of Truth? Who was at present with Them, and who should hereafter be in Them? I imagine, we shall make no Appeal from *The Apostle's Judgment* in This Case: Let *St. Paul* therefore not only explain himself in the passage before quoted, but lead us into the meaning of CHRIST's words as recorded by *The Evangelist*. Now what he says upon This Occasion, is as follows; *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them; and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith THE LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be A FATHER unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the THE LORD ALMIGHTY.*⁸ I hope, This will immediately quash *All your Objections*. It is as plain, as words can make it, That No Other Divine Person, than He who bears The Character of THE FATHER, is THAT SPIRIT who at present dwells with *The Saints*, and who shall be in Them to The End of The World.—If we will conceive of God by *Personal Distinctions* (and I assure you I am far from being *An Enemy to Them, properly understood*) The Matter in question is here tied down
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⁷ John xiv. 16, 17.

⁸ 2 Cor. vi. 16—18.

to *The Very Individual* for us, even to GOD under *The Personal Distinction* of A FATHER.

BUT least even All This should not be sufficient to fasten *Conviction*, in *An Article* of This Difficulty and Moment, It will farther appear, That GOD and SPIRIT are Terms of *Promiscuous Use* in *Scripture*, for *One* and *The Same Divine Person*, and not divided between *Different Subsistencies* in THE GODHEAD, from what *St. Paul* says in Another Part of *This Second Epistle*. The Words, which I refer to, are These: *Nevertheless when it, h. e. the heart of The Jews, shall turn to THE LORD, the vail shall be taken away: Now THE LORD is THAT SPIRIT: and where THE SPIRIT of THE LORD is, there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of THE LORD, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by THE SPIRIT of THE LORD.*⁹ Now as it appears, on the one hand, from The Whole Scope of this place, That by the term LORD is not meant THE LORD JESUS CHRIST or MEDIATOR, but GOD or THE DIVINE BEING; He who is *Originally* and *Absolutely* LORD both of *The Jews* and *Gentiles*: So is it as plain, on the other, That this LORD, JEHOVAH or GOD, is No Other than THE SPIRIT; that is to say, *The Same Individual Being*, who is otherwise described by *That Character*. The Reason is, *The Express Interpretation of The Passage* itself: Because it is said THE LORD is THAT SPIRIT; and farther because,

because, in the last verse, according to *The Marginal Reading*, THE SPIRIT is said to be THE LORD [The Lord, The Spirit.] Not but it is very easy to observe by comparing *The Several Expressions* together, THE LORD is THAT SPIRIT, THE SPIRIT of THE LORD, and THE LORD, THE SPIRIT; That *The Terms* are *All* used in *A Convertible Manner*, to lead us into *Such A Conclusion* as this: That whether THE DIVINE BEING sustain *The Name* of THE LORD or of GOD, or That of THE SPIRIT, we are still, by The Genuine Meaning of the place, referred to *One and The Same Being, Intelligent Agent or Person.*----- This, I may venture to say, is not only *The Current Force* of Language in General; but *The Necessary Result* of The Phraseology in *This Text.* Once More,

III. That SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST is A Character descriptive of THE DIVINE BEING, even of *That Individual Agent or Person*, who is generally known by The Title of GOD, THE FATHER, with A Particular View to *His Spiritual Influences and Operations*, and is not The Character of *Any Distinct Third Person* in THE GODHEAD; *Any Second Superior Creature*; or however otherwise described in *The Common Theories*, may be farther proved from The Consideration following, Namely: That whereever such Characters, as SPIRIT, SPIRIT of GOD, HOLY GHOST, and *The Like*, occur in The Sacred Writings, we shall always find, that *Works of Power and Influence* stand connected with *Them*, being either

plainly exprest, or fairly implied in The Passages. To instance

I. IN *The Works of Nature*: And here

i.) WITH respect to *Creation in General*: What is The Account we have of it in the beginning of *Our Bible*? And THE SPIRIT of GOD moved upon the face of the waters.¹ What is this but to say, That GOD himself, under His Character of Energy, was The Great Efficient in Creation? This Interpretation will certainly hold good, till The Trinitarians can give us A Better Reason, than Custom and Education, for asserting The Distinct Personality of THE SPIRIT OF HOLY GHOST. We should be laught at as Naturalists or Philosophers, should we pretend to say, That The Spirit of A Man is A Distinct Person from The Man Himself; and why it is not full as absurd, in the mouths of those who call themselves Christians and Ministers of The Gospel, to maintain That THE SPIRIT of GOD is A Distinct Person from GOD, b. e. from THE FATHER, unless it be for The Reasons above mentioned, I profess, I cannot understand. Certain it is, That, such A Method of Interpretation, should it be observed here, would throw A Very Odd Light upon The Mosaic Account of The Creation compared with itself. In the first and third verses, and thence on to the close of The Chapter, we are told That GOD created The Heavens and The Earth, not only in The Gross, but their respective Constituent Parts: In the second verse, The phraseology being varied, it is

¹ Gen. i. 2.

is said *THE SPIRIT* of *GOD* moved upon the face of the waters. Why *This Change* of *The Expression*?--- Is it, think you, To insinuate, That notwithstanding *The whole work* was done by *The First Person*, yet that still, some how or other, *The Third Person* would thrust himself in? Who sees not *The Extravagance* of such a Supposition?---So far from *Any Thing* like this, That the obvious design of the place is to *inlarge our ideas* on *The Subject*: And besides acquainting us with *The Glorious Efficient*, which was *No Other Than GOD, THE FATHER*, give us likewise *A General Hint*, as to *The Manner of Production*: That besides *GOD's* doing it *HIMSELF*, he did it by *HIS SPIRIT*, *b. e.* in *A Secret*, and *Powerful Way*.

WHAT has now been observed with respect to *The Article of Creation* from *Moses*, will receive farther *Light* and *Confirmation* from that passage in *Job*: By *HIS SPIRIT* HE garnished *The Heavens*; *HIS HAND* hath formed *The crooked Serpent*.² You find, we have here HE and *HIS SPIRIT*. What are *These Two Distinct Persons* in *GOD*? Or do not the words, compared with *The Context*, plainly direct to *ONE* and *THE SAME GOD*; pointing out, at one view, both *The Agent Himself*, and *The Manner of His Operation*? Does not HE signify *THE SAME DIVINE BEING*, whom *Moses* speaks of under *The Character of GOD*; And *HIS SPIRIT*, *The Secret* and *Powerful Manner* in which HE works; agreeable to the
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other part of *The Mosaic History*, which says : THE SPIRIT of GOD moved upon the face of the waters?----Again : HIS HAND *formed the crooked Serpent*. What is this HAND, after the manner of *The Personal Pronoun HE*, upon *The Trinitarian Plan*, to be restrained to *One Person*, namely *The First* ; and HIS SPIRIT to be reserved for *Another*, that is to say, *The Third*? What *Chopping and Changing and Confusion* must this introduce even in *One of The Plainest Passages* of Scripture?----So then *One Person* in THE GODHEAD is to perform *One Part* in Creation, and *Another Person* in THE GODHEAD to perform *Another*.----This Doctrine would make a tolerable figure upon *The Polytheism of The Heathens*, but wears a very awkward appearance, when dressed out as *An Oracle of Revelation*.----See How *Easy and Pleasant* the account stands in *Our Representation* : Whether we form our ideas of *The Creation*, purely with respect to *The Supreme Efficient*, from *The Passages* before us, or *Other Concurring Testimonies in Scripture*, we shall find That the Whole Matter is comprised in *These Two Things* ; First, *The Agent Himself*, who is No Other than THE DIVINE BEING, THE ONE GOD : And, Secondly, *The Manner in which He operates*, signified sometimes by HIS SPIRIT, and sometimes by HIS HAND, FINGERS² and *The like*. This is The Relation with regard to *The Agent* throughout *The Whole Chapter* ; and this The Description of *His Manner of working in The Verse* before us, where

² Psal. viii. 3.

where HIS HAND and HIS SPIRIT are plainly exegetical of *Each Other*.³ But then

2.) THIS observation will hold not only with respect to *Creation in General*, but also if we examine *The Formation of The Body* of CHRIST in particular. Take the account of this in the words of *Gabriel*: *The Angel answered, and said unto Her, THE HOLY GHOST shall come upon Thee, and* (as it follows by way of *Explanation*) *THE POWER of THE HIGHEST shall overshadow Thee*. Who can this point to and describe, but GOD Himself in respect of *Energy* or *Power*? even *That Divine Agent* or *Person*, who for This Reason among Others, is called, not only simply, GOD THE FATHER, but THE GOD and FATHER of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST?⁴ Again,

2. As to *Miraculous Works*, even *Those* performed by CHRIST Himself, they are resolved into *The Same Cause*; I mean, are attributed to THE DIVINE BEING, under *His Character of Operation*. To this purpose are OUR LORD's words to *The Jews*: *If I cast out devils by THE SPIRIT of GOD, then the kingdom of GOD is come unto you*:⁵ Compared with *A Parallel*

³ I am no stranger to *The Trinitarian Fetch* upon this head; *The Notable Distinction* they have found out (as they think it) to solve All Difficulties of This kind, by pretending *That The External Works of The Trinity belong indifferently to Each Person*. But reserving *A Particular Answer* to *This Formidable Maxim*, till I have more room to insert it, it may be employment enough for Them, at present, To establish *The Reality of These Three Distinct Persons*; To prove it *A Distinction* well supported by *The Word of GOD*: And when They have done *That*, to clear Themselves, as well as They can, from *The Charge of Tritheism*, justly consequent upon it.

⁴ Eph. i. 3.

⁵ Matth. xii. 28.

parallel Text in St. Luke's Gospel, where THE SPIRIT of GOD is explained in *Our Sense*: *If I with THE FINGER of GOD cast out devils, no doubt, the kingdom of GOD is come unto you.*⁶ And that SPIRIT and FINGER in these places are *Characters of Operation* peculiar to *That One Divine Person*, who is commonly distinguished by the name of FATHER, is very evident from those other words of CHRIST: THE FATHER, *that dwelleth in me, He doth The Works.*⁷ Add to this

3. THAT *the like* is observable with respect to *Operations of Grace*. Thus OUR LORD tells Nicodemus: *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of GOD.*⁸ And least he should give into any mistake with regard to *The Efficient of This Work*, or *The Power necessarily required in it*, OUR LORD afterwards explains Himself by saying: *Except a man be born of water and of THE SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD.*⁹ Of the same kind are those words of *The Apostle*, where we are said to be saved by *the washing of water, and renewing of The Holy Ghost.*¹ — These, you observe, are *Accounts descriptive of Conversion, here particularly applied to THE SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST.* — But if we trace *The Argument thro' Other Parts of Revelation*, we shall find, That *The Same Things* are asserted of GOD, that is, of THE ONE DIVINE BEING, commonly known by *The Personal Character* of FATHER. Thus in St. John's Gospel,

⁶ Luke xi. 20.
⁹ Ibid. ver. 5.

⁷ John xiv. 10.
¹ Tit. iii. 5.

⁸ Ibid. iii. 3.

pel, Those, who were brought to receive THE MESSIAH, as an instance of Real Conversion, are said *to be born of GOD*.² GOD! Who is that? What Particular Distinction of *The Personal Sort* does *This Title* belong to? Why, To GOD, even THE FATHER. For, as I have before proved, GOD and FATHER are not only Names *promiscuously applied to The Same Divine Intelligent*; but are, in a sort, *explanatory of Each Other*: So that wherever we read of GOD, it is *The Same*, with regard to *Personal Distinction*, if we must needs bring it down *There*, as if The Character of FATHER were employed; GOD, in such cases, still meaning GOD THE FATHER, according to *The Constant Usage of Scripture*.³----So again, *The Apostle James*, speaking of GOD's concern in The Work under consideration, describes it after this manner: *Of His Own Will begat He us*.⁴ And thus GOD, *b. e.* THE FATHER, is said *to circumcise Our Hearts to fear Him*.⁵ And *To give us A New Heart*.⁶ To the same effect is the language of GOD by *The Prophet*, when He says: *This People have I formed for Myself*.⁷ Nor may it be amiss to observe, That for this reason also *The Gospel* is said to be *The Power*
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² Ch. i. 13.

³ If I were disposed to make *No Abatements* in this argument, I might observe upon it, That forasmuch as FATHER and GOD are *Convertible Terms*, and *Each Person*, with those in *The Popular Theory*, is GOD; it would follow, upon this principle, that *Each Person* too is *The Father*: So inconsistent is *Trinitarianism*! Such *The Confusion* it brings with it!

⁴ James i. 18.

⁵ Deut. xxx. 6.

⁶ Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

⁷ Isa. xliii. 21.

of GOD unto Salvation, to every one that believeth:⁸ That is to say, *The Ministry of The Word* is The Ordinary Means by which GOD THE FATHER is pleased to exert *His Power* for The Conversion of Sinners. *This is The Report* with which THE ARM of THE LORD is revealed.⁹ And when it becomes successful, THE HAND of THE LORD is said to be *with Those* who publish it.¹ But to put The Whole of it beyond doubt, and prove That *The Intire* of Conversion is GOD's province, even *His*, who sustains *The Personal Character* of FATHER, No Other Testimony will be necessary, than what we have from CHRIST's own mouth in the words following: *No man, says He, can come to ME, except THE FATHER, which hath sent ME, draw him.*² And as tho' This were not enough, He adds, in the next verse: *It is written in The Prophets, And they shall be all taught of GOD. Every man therefore, that hath heard and learned of THE FATHER, cometh unto me.*³

ALLOW me here, by the way, to throw in *This Short Observation*, with respect to The Conduct of Our Trinitarian Brethren on This Head.---What *A Prodigious Stir* have we from this quarter for *The Distinct Personality* of THE SPIRIT; because, truly, *The Work of Grace*, or *Conversion* is attributed to HIM! When you plainly see, *The Amount* of it is no more, than that *This Very Work* is as frequently, nay, I might say, *much oftener* ascribed to THE DI-

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⁸ Rom. i. 16.
² John vi. 44.

⁹ Isa. liii. 1.
³ Ibid. ver. 45.

¹ Acts xi. 21.

VINE BEING, either under *The Absolute Character* of GOD, or *The Gracious Character* of FATHER: And that, when it is represented in *The Other Light*, it is intended only to insinuate, That *This Work* belongs to THE DIVINE BEING; and that, in regard to *The Manner of Operation*, he is said to effect it under *His Title of Influence or Power*. Because as *Flesh* signifies *Weakness*, so *Spirit* denotes *Strength*: The Egyptians are men, and not GOD, and their horses *Flesh*, and not *Spirit*.⁴

BUT to procede with The Argument before us:

4. THERE is *Another Operation of Power* attributed to GOD under *This Character*, namely *The Resurrection of CHRIST*, as *The First Fruits*, and *That of The Saints, in Their Order*. As to OUR LORD, St. Peter tells us: That He *also suffered once for sins*, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by THE SPIRIT.⁵---A very Slender Acquaintance with *The New Testament* will satisfy us, That as *This Act* is perpetually referred to GOD THE FATHER, so That The Light in which it is here exhibited, immediately directs to *The working of His Mighty Power*, which he wrought in CHRIST, when He raised Him from the dead.⁶ Tho' should there be any doubt of This Fact, it will intirely vanish when I have subjoined *The Apostle's account of The Resurrection of The Saints*. His words are these: But if THE SPIRIT of HIM, that raised up JESUS from the dead, dwell in you, HE that raised up CHRIST from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies,

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⁴ Isa xxxi. 3.

⁵ 1 Ep. iii. 18.

⁶ Eph. i. 19, 20.

dies, by HIS SPIRIT, *that dwelleth in you.*⁷ What is this but saying, That *The Same God*, who had raised *The Head*, would likewise, at the time appointed, raise *The Members*? This is certainly *One Part* of *The Representation*: Or else, As *The Other Part* of it, That THE ONE GOD, THE FATHER of all, who had quickened *their souls* by *The Powerful Influence* of *His Own Grace*, even He also, by *The Same Almighty Power*, would quicken *their bodies*, in the morning of *The Resurrection*?⁸---The accounts already given of THE HOLY GHOST, both as THE SPIRIT of GOD, and THE SPIRIT *that dwelleth in the Saints*, thoroughly confirm *This Interpretation*. Once more,

5. AND lastly: The Affair of *Consolation*, particularly with regard to The Disciples under the loss of CHRIST'S *Bodily Presence*, is accounted for in The Same Way; that is to say, is attributed to God under *His Character of Operation*. They are OUR LORD'S own words: *I will pray THE FATHER, and He shall give you Another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever*; even THE SPIRIT of Truth.⁹ This was certainly *A Work* not to be effected without the exertion of *Divine Power*; and therefore THE GREAT GOD, as concerned in it, could not be represented to Higher Advantage than under *This Character*.---And that *Consolation* descends from THE DIVINE BEING, *b. e.* THE FATHER, thro' THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, *The Alone Medium*, is evident from His being called THE GOD of *Consolation*,

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⁷ Rom. viii. 11.⁸ Psa. xlix. 14.⁹ John xiv. 16, 17.

as well as *THE GOD of Patience*. The reason of Both is *The Same*, namely, Because *He is The Author*, and *Maintainer of The One* as well as *The Other* : Now *THE GOD of Patience and Consolation*, grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to *CHRIST JESUS*.¹ This perfectly consists with what *St. Paul* says in Another Place, where he bears Testimony to this truth in Both Parts of it: First, by acknowledging, That *GOD*, even *THE FATHER*, *Had given The Church Consolation*, and therefore was *The Author* of it; and, Secondly, by praying to *Him* for *Future Supplies*, from which *He* appears to be *The Supporter* of it. The words at length are these: Now *OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST* himself, and *GOD*, even *OUR FATHER*, which *HATH* loved us, and *HATH* given us *Everlasting Consolation*, and *Good Hope*, thro' *Grace*, *COMFORT* your hearts, and *STABLISH* you in *Every Good Word and Work*.²

Now from The Whole of This put together, *What is The Conclusion?* Certainly, No Other than *That*, The Word *SPIRIT* or *HOLY GHOST* is not designed, in its *Proper Application* to *DEITY*, to suggest Any Such Thing, as Those in *The Popular Scheme* would have us believe, namely, A *THIRD DIVINE EQUAL* IN *GODHEAD*; but is plainly intended to point out *THE DIVINE BEING HIMSELF*, even *THAT GOD*, who is otherwise known by *The Gracious Appellation* of *FATHER*. And *That*, As *He* is *The Fountain of Power*, proved to

¹ Rom. xv. 5.

² 2 Theff. ii. 16, 17.

to be *Such* by His being *Our Common Creator and Parent*, both in *Nature* and *Grace*; So *His Influence*, in *The Whole Compass* of it, cannot be *More Significantly Expressed*, than by *The Words SPIRIT and HOLY GHOST, His Proper Characters of Operation*. But to conclude,

IV. *Our Account* of *THE SPIRIT* or *HOLY GHOST* will appear to be genuine, because *The Scripture* frequently makes use of *Those Terms* in *Such Manner*, as to forbid *All Accommodation* with *The Vulgar Notion* of *A Third Distinct Person* in *THE GODHEAD*. Thus, where *God* says by *The Prophet*: *I have put MY SPIRIT upon HIM*; ³ *b. e.* upon *CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR*. To which that passage in *The Acts* is *A Parallel*, where we are told: *God anointed JESUS of Nazareth with THE HOLY GHOST*.⁴ And again, in *The Gospel* by *St. John* we have these words: *God giveth not THE SPIRIT by measure* unto *Him*.⁵---None of *Our Trinitarian Brethren* will deny, but that *SPIRIT* and *HOLY GHOST* in these places are *The Same* with what they call *The Third Person* in *THE GODHEAD*: That being granted, Let Them consider, how *The Accounts* agree, Either, First, With what They Themselves allow concerning *THE MEDIATOR*, I mean, That *He is Originally possessed of All The Fulness of THE GODHEAD*: Or, Secondly, With Their Notion of *THE SPIRIT*, as *A Distinct Hypostasis* in *THE DIVINE BEING*. For if, according to *The First Principle*, He is *Originally and Absolutely pos-*
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³ Isa. xlii. 1.

⁴ Ch. x. 28.

⁵ Ch. iii. 34.

essed of All Divine Fulness, What Need can there be, or, rather, What Room is there for The Addition of A Third Divine Person? Which is nevertheless Their Sense of These Scriptures.---And if, according to The Second Principle, THE SPIRIT of GOD be A Third Divine Person, What Sort of A Notion shall we be obliged to form both of CHRIST and THE SPIRIT; while we are taught to believe, That One Divine Person is put upon Another Divine Person? That The Second Divine Person is Anointed with The Third Divine Person? And that GOD giveth One Divine Person without Measure to Another Divine Person?

ARE Our Brethren startled at this Unexpected Return, and almost tempted to court Relief upon *The Terms* of Their Adversaries? ---Alas! Had They *Inclination* to betray Their Own Cause, when *The Odds* against Them is so *Considerable*, Their *Principles*, however, would by no means allow of it.---This HOLY GHOST or SPIRIT, with Them, is *A Person, A Real Hypostasis*; and not GOD in *His Influence or Power*.---And should we even compliment Them with *The Supposition*; fancy That *They desire to be understood in Our Sense*; What would be The Consequence? No more to *Their Advantage* than this, That taking THE SPIRIT to mean *Influence* in These Texts, why, They would then supply THE MEDIATOR from *A Division, A Portion* only of GODHEAD:⁶

Whereas

⁶ Here again I am willing to spare *My Brethren*, by restraining such An Observation as This: Either, That THEIR SPIRIT, as *A Third, Distinct Person*, is altogether *Imaginary*; and therefore,

Whereas We say, It is not *The Influence, Furniture or Qualification of Any Distinct, Divine Person*; but The Glorious Result of *The Fullness of DEITY*; *The Intire Influence of THE ONE GOD*; His *Unction*, who is THE FATHER of CHRIST; and who, in point of *Communication*, to say Nothing of *Other Reasons*, is stiled HIS FATHER, as well as HIS GOD.

AND, indeed, if we look closely into things, we shall find, That *The Scripture* itself points out *This Estimate* to us. Thus, for instance, where GOD says, That HIS SPIRIT *should rest upon THE MEDIATOR*:⁷ which is As much as to say, That *He* would not only *put it* upon *Him*, but that it should *abide there*; That *He* would not only *dwell in Him*, but *constantly influence Him*: The Description of The Matter is as follows: *The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of THE LORD*: Including *All Necessary Furniture* for the execution of *His Mediatorial Character*. So in The Epistle to *The Hebrews*: *Therefore GOD, even THY GOD, hath anointed THEE with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows*.⁸ To intimate both THE MEDIATOR'S *Investiture with Office*, and *His Qualifications* to discharge it. And, to mention no more, of like import

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fore, that THE MEDIATOR, in fact, can be secure of *No Divine Influence*: Or Else, That *The Spirit*, being what they assert, namely, *A Third Divine Equal*, they have undoubtedly *Another God*. But I pass these things, because I would not press them too hard.

⁷ Isa. xi. 2.

⁸ Ch. i. 9.

is what we find in that forequoted passage from *The Acts*, where JESUS of Nazareth is said to be *anointed with THE HOLY GHOST*, and *with POWER*: The Whole Difference between *Those Two Words*, as I apprehend, being no more than *This*, That the former, *HOLY GHOST*, signifies his *Investiture*, or *Reception of Proper Abilities*; and the latter, namely *POWER*, his being under *The Perpetual Influence of His Unction*; as what manifested itself in his *going about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil*: Therefore is it added, consistent with *This Explication*, *For GOD was [continually] with Him*. He had not only *The Office of MEDIATOR*, but *The Constant Influx* necessary to it.

IN perfect agreement with *This Use* of *The Word*, we read concerning *Ourselves* of receiving *The Spirit of bondage to fear*.⁹ What! Is this *A Third Person* in GOD? Or, Is it not rather *A Spirit* or *Temper of Mind* gendering to bondage? Filled with *Slavish Fear* from the apprehensions of *Divine Wrath*, as due to us for sin? And so again, *The Scripture* speaks of *The Spirit of Adoption*,¹ which can mean *Nothing More*, than *A Filial*, or *Childlike Disposition*; attended with *Liberty* and *Boldness* in Our Approaches to *THE DIVINE MAJESTY*; and not *A Third Distinct Person* in GOD. In like manner St. Paul says: That GOD *had not given Them*, h. e. The Apostles, *The Spirit of Fear*, but of *Power*,² and *the rest*. As much as to say, That GOD had not resigned Them to

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⁹ Rom. viii. 15.¹ Ibid.² 2 Tim. i. 7.

The Fear of Men, to A Cowardly Disposition; but had filled Them with Courage and Resolution for Himself. And, to close this account, upon the same foot, God is said to shed THE HOLY GHOST abundantly upon us. The Apostle's words are: According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of water and the renewing of THE HOLY GHOST, which [HOLY GHOST] he shed on us abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST Our Saviour.³---Does St. Paul mean, That He shed A Third Person in THE GODHEAD upon us? Or, rather, Is it not to be understood of Gracious Communications from GOD Himself; The Seat of All Divine Power, and Source of All Spiritual Influence?---In all these cases The Scriptures fully interpret themselves, and refute The Vulgar Theory.

THUS I have gone thro' A Few Arguments, as I said before, out of A Larger Number in Reserve: And Those not selected, as Better than The Rest, which is The Common Practice; because being Each of Them Equally Conclusive, it was indifferent, which I made choice of.---And tho' it is certain, I have not said All that may be offered on The Subject, nor, indeed, A Quarter Part of what lies by me in Manuscript (being furnished with Particular Dissertations on Those Scriptures, which more nearly concern This Branch of The Argument; and therein with Answers to The Most Material, if not All The Objections, that can be made to This Explication) yet, I hope, it will be found, even from This Specimen only, That

That enough has been offered, to make it *More than Probable*, That GOD, FATHER, and SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST, are *Equally and Indifferently Characters of The Same Divine, Intelligent Agent or Being*: And That They are *not to be distributed*, after The Popular Manner, among *Distinct Individuals*, or *Different Hypostases in THE DIVINE ESSENCE*; Which was *The Whole* that I proposed in *The Present Attempt*.

WHAT I have farther to subjoin, will be *Such General Observations or Conclusions*, as naturally arise from *This View of THE GOD-HEAD*.





GENERAL OBSERVATIONS *or*
CONCLUSIONS FROM THE
SUBJECT.

FIRST. ONE *Very Important Observation*, which arises from This *Scriptural Account* of THE DIVINE BEING, is, That it is from hence very evident, That *there is no Real Foundation for The Trinitarian Distinction of DEITY into GOD ESSENTIAL and GOD PERSONAL.*

I MAKE no question, but most of you, who have in any measure conversed, either with *Ministers* or *Books* on This Subject, have frequently met with what I now mention: However, lest you should not retain The Distinction with *That Strength and Compass*, which may be necessary to make you *Proper Judges* in The Argument, I would take This Opportunity of refreshing Your Memories by observing: That according to *The Trinitarian Theory*, All those places of *Scripture*, where it is

is said, *There is but ONE GOD*, or, *That GOD is ONE* (such as those in *The Margin*⁴) are to be understood of *GOD Essentially*; that is, of *The Intire Divine Essence*: Or, in other words, That where The Term *GOD* is indefinitely used, it is designed to include *The Whole Deity*; to signify That *GOD*, with respect to His Essence, is *Numerically ONE*. But, on the contrary, according to The Other Part of *This System*: That All Those places of Scripture, which speak of *GOD* by way of *Restriction* or *Limitation*; Or, which use The Word with *A Particular Application* to *FATHER*, *SON* and *SPIRIT* (such as those below⁵) are to be interpreted of *GOD Personally*; that is, as They would have us believe, of *Those Three Distinct Persons*, which did *Eternally Exist* in *The Divine Essence*.

THIS, it is true, is *Their Distinction*, and A Very Notable One, They think it; and yet, I imagine, it will be found, when *critically examined* and *applied to Scripture*, to be altogether *Trifling* and *Absurd*. Suffer me, with This View, in the first Place to inquire, From whence did they borrow *This Choice Maxim*? What *Foundation in Reason*, or, What *Authority* from Scripture can They produce for it? ---As to *The Light of Nature*, Nothing is more certain, than That its *Universal Dictate*, in this case, is *Absolute Numerical Unity*. Not One, among *The Antient Philosophers*, ever dreamt, That *The First Eternal Existent* was any

⁴ Deut. vi. 4. John iv. 24. 1 Cor. viii. 4. Gal. iii. 20, &c.

⁵ 1 Cor. viii. 6. John i. 1. Acts v. 4.

any more, than ONE *Simple, Uncompounded, Conscious Being, or Mind.*—And for *The Sacred Writings*, they are so far from giving Countenance to *This Distinction*, That an attempt to explain *Scripture* in *A Consistency* with itself, upon *This Theory*, would be *Utterly Impracticable*. If *Any Hypothesis* ever threw *Darkness* and *Confusion* upon *Scripture*; ever set *Revelation* at *Variance* with itself, *The Trinitarian* certainly does.

FOR, should it be allowed, according to *This Scheme*, That *The Scriptures* sometimes affirm, That *there is but ONE GOD*, and at other times, That *there are Three Distinct Persons*, Each of Them as *Properly GOD*, as *The Other*; and *All of Them*, *Co-equal, Co-essential, and Co-eternal*; What would follow upon it, but That *Scripture* maintains *Contradictory Propositions*? Or, at least, must it be acknowledged, as A *Necessary Consequence*, That *Revelation* addresses us in such A Way, as is *Highly Equivocal*; and therefore That we have *No Standard of Explication*, nor Any Means left us to *Reconcile Scripture with itself*. The Assertion carries its *Own Proof* along with it. For should it be granted, according to *The Trinitarian System*, That *Revelation* in *this* and *the other place*, peremptorily asserts, That *there is but ONE GOD*, as *Absolutely, or Numerically One*, as words can be made to speak; and yet, all the while, in *Reality*, mean, That there are, in *THIS ONE GOD*, no less than *Three Persons*, Each equally intitled to, and possessed of *DIVINITY*, A man must be extremely

tremely weak in his discursive faculties, not to observe, That this so far *embarrasses Revelation*, as not only to make it *Inconsistent with Itself*, but *Wholly Unintelligible to Others*.----- That *Three are One*, and *One Three*, is such *A Contradiction in Nature*, That it would be impossible to fasten *A Proposition of This Kind* upon *The Meanest Capacity*.

As Little Success will attend *Our Brethren*, should we follow Them into *Their Imaginary Reason*, *Their Boasted Necessity for This Distinction*, which is *No Other*, truly, Than That, Besides The Indefinite Character of God, by which THE DIVINE BEING is spoken of, *Essentially*, as They term it; Why, They sometimes find, That THE FATHER is called God; at other times, That THE SON takes *The Same Appellation*; and, lastly, That THE HOLY GHOST, in like manner, is said to be God. And farther (as what abundantly settles Them in This Distinction) That there are frequently, up and down *Scripture*, such *Distinct Personal Works* ascribed to Them, as, in Their Apprehension, bespeak no less than *Three Distinct Personal Agents* in our Salvation.----Very well. Suffer me only, by the way, to congratulate myself here, that having never been left to deny *Either of These Principles*, I have the satisfaction of knowing, that I have not yet been *Intirely Heterodox*.---I acknowledge, and did ever acknowledge, That FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT stand described by The Character of God in *Scripture*; and that They are there spoken of as *Distinct Personal*

sonal Agents; as managing *Different Parts* in The Great Affair of Salvation.--- But, What is this, strictly speaking to GOD ESSENTIAL and GOD PERSONAL? Surely such *A Conclusion* as this will not oblige me to adopt The Common Distinction! ---I must be strangely sunk in *Stupidity* or *Prejudice* not to *See* and *Confess*, That THE FATHER is *A Distinct Person*, and *A Distinct Personal Agent*; and That The *Same Things* are equally True of THE MEDIATOR or SON: Nay farther, Not to acknowledge, That THE HOLY GHOST likewise is *represented*, or *spoken of* in *The Same Personal Way*. But then, with respect to THIS SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST (for it is *here*, you observe, that I stick) Notwithstanding it is certain, That He is *A Person*, and *One* really *Distinct* from THE SON; and I add, Notwithstanding farther, That THIS SPIRIT is *represented* in *Scripture* as *A Distinct Person*, and also, as *acting A Distinct Part* in our *Salvation*, not to say *Only from* THE SON, but even *from* THE FATHER *also*; h. e. From THE ONE GOD, considered strictly in *The Paternal Character*: Yet, I cannot, at present, be induced to believe, That He is, Either with regard to *His Metaphysical Nature*, or Any Such Consideration as necessarily implies *A Second* or *Third Intelligent* in DEITY, *Another Divine Person*, *Another Individual*, *Distinct from* THE FATHER. And having offered *The Reasons*, Some of them at least, which prevail with me in This Case, and which establish The Matter to me, beyond Contradiction, in The Body of *This Discourse*;

course; I am willing to persuade myself, That all farther trouble about it is *Unnecessary here*: And that I may immediately possess myself of *The Conclusion* natural from the premises, I mean, That *there is, at last, A Fair End* to That Popular Distinction of GOD ESSENTIAL and GOD PERSONAL: *Since with respect to The Metaphysical Nature and Identity of Being, FATHER and SPIRIT are Numerically One.*

HOWEVER, least what has been already suggested, should not be sufficient to detect *The Weakness* of *The Present Distinction*; as *The Last and Most Effectual Means* to accomplish it, Let us *apply* This Ingenious Distinction to *The Interpretation* of some particular passage of *Scripture*, and then see What Extraordinary Light will arise from it. For this purpose, out of A Great Variety, that might be produced, I can think of none *More Pertinent* and *Equal on Both Sides*, than That in The Evangelist *John*; The Words of Our Dear LORD: *This is Life Eternal, that they might know THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom THOU hast sent.*⁶---Now if by THE ONLY TRUE GOD, in this place, we are to understand FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT (as we ought according to *The Trinitarian Plan*, because GOD is here spoken of *Indefinitely* or *Essentially*) What must we do with The Remaining Part of the passage? What account shall we give of THE MEDIATOR? For it follows: *And JESUS CHRIST, whom THOU hast sent.*---By *This Method of Interpretation,*

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tation, we shall have FOUR PERSONS in THE GODHEAD ; FOUR Objects of Faith instead of THREE.-----But, in *Contradiction* to *The Present Maxim*, it is very evident from *The Context*, That by THE ONE ONLY TRUE GOD, is intended *No Other* than THE DIVINE BEING HIMSELF, *b. e.* THE FATHER, in Distinction from CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR. This is easily collected, As *He* appears to be *The Object*, to whom OUR LORD here applies, from his calling Him FATHER, once and again ; and HOLY and RIGHTEOUS FATHER in different parts of His Address.--- And then with reference to THE HOLY GHOST, we may farther observe, That there is not *A Breath* concerning HIM in This Text ; and yet, That even *without This Person*, formally introduced, and made Necessary to Happiness, as *A Distinct Divine Person*, Salvation is assured to The Church upon *The Sole Believing* in THE FATHER, as THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and in JESUS CHRIST, as *His Ordinance and Mission*.

I HAD, indeed, at first, no thoughts of putting *This Maxim* to *Farther Torture*, than what it has now undergone : But apprehending, on *Another View* of Things, That Some may be ready to insinuate, That This is only *A Partial Test of The Rule*, I am very willing it should have the advantage of *A Second Experiment*. Let it therefore be applied to *Another Text*, such in particular, where The Description wholly turns on THE DIVINE BEING ; as suppose for instance, That in *The Gospel*

*Gospel by St. John : God is A Spirit.*⁷ Here, by *The Instructions* before us, God is to be understood *Essentially* : That is to say, of FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT exhibiting *The Modal Existence* of THE DIVINE BEING from Eternity : Be it so. And this you are farther to observe, without *Any Intimations* of *A Mediator*, Any discoveries of *Salvation* and *Happiness* to *Fallen Creatures*. What *A Blessed Situation* is Here ! See *The Estimate* we are to make of it in *The First Part* of *The Discourse*.---The Conclusion then from hence is, That *The Rule*, in *This Application* of it, happens to prove as *Defective* as it was *Redundant* in *The Other* : And therefore upon *The Whole*, That *The Distinction*, we have been now examining, is both *Unscriptural* and *Insignificant*.

I AM aware, That before I shall be able fully to acquit myself on *This Subject*, I shall be obliged to take notice of Some Such *Inquiry* or *Objection*, as what follows :

THE OBJECTION.

Does not *My Bible* (will One say) frequently inculcate *The Doctrine* of FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT ; and so, of necessity, lead me to conceive of *Salvation* as *contrived*, *carried on*, and *effected* by THESE THREE ?--- Is not *The Great Work* of *Our Recovery* and *Happiness* commonly attributed to THREE in *Scripture* ? And are not THOSE THREE per-

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⁷ Chap. iv. 24. See *The Concordance Recommended* by Dr. Owen on the word God.

petually described by *Personal Characters* and *Works*?---What then am I to make of *THESE THREE*? By *What Name* am I to call Them, if They be not *THREE PERSONS, THREE Distinct Agents*?

THIS is neither more nor less, than *The Same Thing in Another Form*: Only That Our Brethren are so fond of *This Darling Notion*, that They will with *Great Difficulty* be brought to resign it; and therefore oblige us to hall The Argument over again, that we may have A Better Opportunity of fastening *The Conviction* upon Them.

THE ANSWER.

I CONFESS, there is so much weight in *An Objection* of This Kind, as founded upon *The Current Representations of Scripture*, That I cannot but indulge myself a *Greater Scope* upon This Observation, in order to set *My Own Principles* in full view, and assist *The Christian* on This Part of *Revelation*, than would be otherwise *Proper* or *Allowable*, within the compass of *A Single Discourse*.----In answer therefore to what has been now proposed: It is allowed (as it was above) That *The Scripture* does frequently make mention of *Three*; that *The Great Concerns of Salvation* are distributed among *THOSE THREE*; and that we are, by these means, taught to conceive of *Our Recovery*, as effected by so many *Distinct Personal Agents*.----Yet, What of All This? Such *A Representation* will no more
prove

prove That there are actually Three Distinct Intelligent Agents or Persons in THE GOD-HEAD; than my saying, That The Emperor of Germany, The King of Great Britain, and The Elector of Hanover, are Three Distinct Persons, because They may be jointly concerned in some Important Alliance under Those Characters.---In The Present Supposition there are Nominally Three Persons, but in Reality Two Only. And it is just so, I apprehend, with regard to The Doctrine of Divine Personality.---For instance, As The King of Great Britain and The Elector of Hanover is but One Person Really, tho' Nominally Two; so GOD THE FATHER and THE HOLY GHOST are Two in Name, but One only in Person.---Nay farther (for I would by no means confine The Argument) We will, for once, say That The King of Great Britain and The Elector of Hanover are Two Persons, not only as The Same Prince sustains Two Different Characters; but as he is not strictly The Same Person, nor does, in fact, perform The Same Acts under One Character, as he is, and does under The Other. As Elector of Hanover, he may be considered as One Person (and that, in a sense, distinct from what he is under Another Title; subsisting as That Person, I mean, as Elector of Hanover, tho' he were supposed to bear No Other) And as King of Great Britain, he may be considered as Another Person, at as Great A Remove from Elector of Hanover, as Elector of Hanover is from King of Great Britain: This Distinction of Persons turning upon The Exercise

Exercise of *The Particular Offices and Powers* respectively connected with *These Different Characters*.---Well, All this being allowed (and by the way it is allowing, I imagine, All that any can desire) What is gained by it, in the issue, as to *Proper, Distinct Personality*? Nothing at all. *The Characters and Persons* (under this view of *Persons*) will still return upon, and center in *One Intelligent Agent*.---To bring this home to *The Present Argument*: In the same manner, we maintain, concerning THE DIVINE BEING, and have The Highest Reason for it, That he is *Two Nominally* (as to His Grand, Comprehensive, Leading Characters) nay, and *Two Personally*, even FATHER and SPIRIT: Considering *The Same Intelligent Being*, as standing in *Different Relations*, and acting in *Different Lights*; *The Peculiar*s of *One* as *different* from *The Other*, as if resident in *Persons* actually different among *Themselves*: Because here GOD or *The First Cause* is A FATHER in *One View*, and A SPIRIT in *Another*.---Why, we dare affirm, even *All This* of THE DIVINE BEING: Nay we do affirm it, as what in no wise exceeds The Truth: And yet, when it is done, What is The Amount of The Whole Assertion? What Advance does it make towards The Proof of *Three Distinct Persons* in THE DIVINE ESSENCE? Just none at all.---It is true, it makes *A Proper Distinction* in THE GODHEAD for *These Personal Attributions*, and, I apprehend, that is *The Whole*, which The Doctrine requires,---THE DIVINE BEING IS ONE, and yet

yet Two, supposing *The Same Intelligent Agent* to sustain *Two Different Characters*; *Characters* as *Different*, as if They belonged to *Different Persons*; *Characters* as *Different*, as *Those* of King of Great Britain and Elector of Hanover: Yet, behold! all this while, we have but ONE GOD, that is to say, properly speaking, *One Intelligent Agent* or *Person*.

THUS much as to GOD or THE DIVINE BEING, which helps us to account for *Two* of *These Personal Characters*. Then farther, with respect to CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR (to make up what remains of The Complement) None will more willingly allow *Him* to be *A Person*, than myself: That is what I readily grant; nay, what I strenuously contend for: I mean, That THE MEDIATOR is *A Person*, and *A Distinct Person* from THE DIVINE BEING, both as FATHER and HOLY GHOST; as much as The Emperor of Germany is *A Distinct Person* from The King of Great Britain and The Elector of Hanover. So that here we have No Difficulty in our way: It is full as easy to account for The Attribution of *Personal Characters* and *Personal Works* to THE MEDIATOR upon *Our System*, as upon *The Vulgar*.---But this, I shall be told, does not come up to *The Trinitarian Account* of THE SON'S *Distinct Person*? Indeed, I do not know, how it should: Nor is it possible for me to conceive, how *The Trinitarians* can ever make out *That Personality*, which They attribute to THE SON; what I design is, How They can furnish us with sufficient

ficient Proof, That He is *A Second Person, Eternally subsisting* in THE UNITY of THE DIVINE ESSENCE. It is true, The Text says: That GOD *has made* HIM, both LORD and CHRIST.¹ But does it follow from thence, That *He did Necessarily and Eternally Exist*? Or, That *He is LORD and CHRIST Originally and Independent* of Any First Cause? (for Nothing Short of This will rise to Their Pitch) Verily, quite the Reverse; The Bare Letter of The Text pronounces against Them.---No, it is sufficient, I apprehend, That *He is THE MEDIATOR, THE MESSIAH, THE SON, and the rest*; sufficient to prove Him *A Distinct Person* from THE DIVINE BEING (which is all that we want, at present) tho' not *A Distinct Person* in THE GODHEAD.

IN one word, and to close This Part of *The Observation*: We are free to acknowledge, that *The Concerns of Salvation* are represented as lying between THREE; and that Those THREE, in Scripture, are frequently described by *Personal Names*; and farther, that there is such *A Distinction* in *The Beings* sustaining *Those Names*, that we may, upon Warrantable Principles, call Them *Persons* (You see to what Lengths we can go:) Nay more, We can even acknowledge THE SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST to be *A Person*, and That *A Divine Person*. But then, it must be observed, that The Whole of This is allowed in Reference to *The Manner* in which we have all along accounted for *Divine Personality*; that is to say, That there

¹ Acts ii. 36.

there are THREE in Name, but Two only in Fact: Two Really, which are THE FATHER and CHRIST; but THREE Nominally: Because THE DIVINE BEING sustains Two Grand, Distinguishing Characters, namely, Those of FATHER and SPIRIT. And yet call These, I mean, FATHER and SPIRIT, Persons if you please; not only, because They have One Common Substratum, or center Equally in THE SAME DIVINE BEING; but also, because GOD, in The Discharge of These Relations, and The Offices connected with Them, acts in as Different Lights, and by as Different Ways, as if These Characters terminated in, and depended upon Two Distinct Persons.

UPON The Whole then, it is no difficult matter to observe, from what has been now offered, That I have no Objection to The Doctrine of Personality in The Main of it; but, on the contrary, am ready to own, That, besides its being Proper Enough, as to The Gross or Bulk of it, it is, indeed, farther, So Necessary to The Reading Our Bible, and Understanding The Method of Salvation, That we cannot do without it. My Objection therefore is intirely levelled against This Distinct Divine Personality; making absolutely Three Distinct Intelligent Agents or Persons in THE DIVINE BEING.²----For notwithstanding All The Concessions I have hitherto made on This Head, I am still obliged to abide by My First Grand Principle of Interpreting Scripture, which is,

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That

² See Mr. JOHN RUDD's Letter to The Congregation in Broad Street, WAPPIN: Where This Argument is discussed: Pag. 6. and on.

That thro' The Whole of Revelation, in The Great Affair of Our Recovery and Happiness, we are, in reality, concerned with No More than Two Distinct Personages, namely, GOD and CHRIST, or THE DIVINE and MEDIATORIAL BEINGS.---But only as THE DIVINE BEING stands in Such Different Lights, and transacts Such Different Parts in Salvation, Sometimes with regard to *His Grace*, and at Other Times with regard to *His Power*; why, He sustains Two Such Characters, as allow us to speak of Him under Two Different Personal Names, and, in A Sense, to conceive of Him, as Two Different Persons.---And I am humbly of opinion, That it has been Our Ignorance of This Distinction; Our not understanding how The Great Affair of Salvation is managed by GOD and CHRIST, under These Three Leading Characters, that has so long inflaved us to The Popular Theory. For want of This, we have, as it were, been thrown on A Sort of Necessity (at least what has passed with us for such) of making Three Distinct Persons in THE GOD-HEAD, to account for The Three Distinct Personal Names, ascribed to THE FATHER and SON, and The Distinct Acts affirmed of Those Personal Names; which, tho' Three in Number, center only in Two Intelligent Agents.

I MIGHT, indeed, if it were not overbearing Your Patience, and clogging The Argument too much, Farther observe, by way of Illustration and Proof of what is before us, That it is No Uncommon Thing among Men, for Two or More Characters to center in One and The Same Person;

Person; and for *That Person*, in consequence of *Such Variety of Character*, to have *Different Personal Works* ascribed him. Thus, for Example, *A Man* may be *A Father*, *A Master*, and *A Magistrate*, h. e. *A Ruler*, *Judge*, or *King*: And he may have *The Distinct Personal Works*, suited to *Those Various Characters* attributed to *Him*; nay, what is more, *he* may actually discharge *The Several Duties* laid up in *Those Different Relations* towards *One* and *The Same Subject*.--But, I imagine, *The Whole* of this is so plain, that I should justly offend by attempting farther *Inlargement*.

If there be *Any Thing* yet remaining *Necessary* to clear up *This Part* of the *Argument*, it can be charged only to *Some Scruple*, that may possibly rise in *A Tender, Inquisitive Mind*, with respect to *The Validity* of *This System* in point of *Eternal Happiness* and *Life*.-----But *What Suspicions* of *This Sort* there should be attending *Our Hypothesis*, more than *That*, which is *commonly received*, I profess, I cannot, at present, discern.---I challenge *The Most Prejudiced*, and *Artful* of *My Adversaries* to assign *Any One Convincing Argument* or *Reason*, Why *THE DIVINE BEING*, as *A FATHER* in *Relation*, and *A SPIRIT* in *Operation*; and *THE SON*, considered as *THE MESSIAH*, or *Alone MEDIATOR* between *GOD* and *Man*: Why *THESE TWO*, *ONE GOD* and *ONE MEDIATOR*, *The Former*, as *The Fountain* of *All*, and *The Latter*, as *The Medium* or *Instrument*, are not *Every Way* as sufficient to *The Great Purposes* of *Salvation*,

as *The Trinitarian Representation* of this matter by ONE GOD and THREE DIVINE PERSONS.--For besides, that I am obliged to think, from *The Nature and Dependence* of Things, That GOD in CHRIST, or, which is the same in other words, THE DIVINE BEING *by and thro' A Proper Medium*, is *Equal* to All The Necessities of my Soul, for Time and Eternity: I would fain know, What is The Advantage, with regard to Any Thing *Spiritual*, Any Grand *Essential* in *Salvation*, which *The Trinitarians* secure to Themselves, above what is provided for *Here*; when it is Notorious, that They Themselves allow, That *One Divine Person* (to go no farther) is possessed of *As Much*, as *The Intire Three*, in *Conjunction*? --If this be true, or, rather, if this be A Principle with *The Trinitarians*, as it undoubtedly is, Then it follows of course, That *This Division* of THE GODHEAD is altogether *Needless*; it follows even upon Their Own Explication of *A Divine Person*: Because *One* possessing *As Much* as *Three*, *Two* of Them are Necessarily *Superseded*, and *Cut off*.----And Again, singly, with reference to THE MEDIATORIAL BEING, I have The Same Demand to make as before, What Substantial Reason can They give, Why ONE MEDIATOR, in My Account of HIM, is not as Sufficient to discharge *The Office*, to which He was appointed by HIS FATHER, when it is confessed That *All The Fullness* of THE GODHEAD dwells in HIM *bodily*; as *Their Second Person* in Union with The Human Nature? Why cannot OUR
MEDI-

MEDIATOR perform *The Same Works*, and undergo *The Same Sufferings*, as *The Trinitarian*? And why should not *His Obedience* and *Sufferings* be as *Valuable* with *The DIVINE BEING* as *THEIR MEDIATOR's*? For, good now, let it be considered, What is it that *THEIR MEDIATOR* possesses, as to *His Private Nature* and *Constitution*, which *OURS* has not? And if *They* are *Both* upon a *par* with regard to *Personal Dignity* and *Furniture*, what *Superior Influence*, either as to *Obedience* or *Suffering*, *Satisfaction* or *Merit*, can *THEIRS* pretend to, which *OURS* does not *equally claim*? *The Trinitarian MEDIATOR* can rise no higher than *IMMANUEL, GOD with Us*; and, be it known to *Them*, *OUR MEDIATOR* is no less: *HE* can but *fulfil the law*, and *expiate the guilt of sin*; *OUR MEDIATOR*, I am not ashamed to confess, has *equal interest* in those things. So that, in one word, to close *This Observation*, unless those in *The Vulgar Theory* can refute *These Principles* (which, I will venture to say, will prove *No Light Task*) *This System* bids as fair for *Salvation* as *That of Trinitarianism*.----I wish, from the bottom of My Heart, *They* would once undertake *This Work*; *They* would certainly find *Themselves More Intangled*, than *They* can readily be aware of: And, what is much more, unless I am *Strangely Mistaken*, would fall under *The Strongest Temptations* of quitting *The Popular System*, and Embrace *Unitarianism*, as it presents *Itself* from *The Native, Unmixt Evidence of Scripture*. But then

SECONDLY.

SECONDLY. ANOTHER Observation, which Naturally arises from This Subject, is, *The Necessity*, which Our Trinitarian Brethren are under, to recede from Their Present Definition of the Word *Person*, as applied by Them, to What They call *Different Subsistencies* in THE DIVINE ESSENCE.---This will immediately appear, when you know That Each Divine Person with Them is *An Individual Intelligent Agent*³; No *Property, Attribute or Mode*, but *A Real, A Subsisting Person, An Hypostasis*⁴; An Individual, That *Necessarily Exists*, and is *Independent* in respect of *Personality*.⁵---Now if This be *A Just Definition* of The Word *Person*, as applied to *The Popular Distinctions* in THE GODHEAD, What is The Consequence? Why, That then there are THREE GODS: Because *Whatever* is such *A Distinct Substance* with respect to DEITY, and *Exists* in The Manner here set forth, must of *Necessity* be GOD. But say They, This is true of *Three Hypostases, Three Real, Subsisting Persons*; therefore Conclude we, from Their Own Premises, There are THREE GODS.---If They deny *This Conclusion*, as, we may be sure, They will; What is The Consequence then? Nothing less, than what I am here contending for,

³ Dr. Waterland's Sermons, Preface, p. 51. And First Defence, p. 350.

⁴ Dr. Waterland's Sermons, p. 140. First Defence, p. 350. and 355. Second Defence, p. 766.

⁵ Dr. Ridgley's Body of Divinity, Vol. I. p. 116. His words are: *The Divine Persons have A Necessary Existence and Personality*, as being in *All Respects Independent*.---And afterwards, speaking of THE SON and HOLY GHOST, he says: *They have The Divine Nature in The Same Sense*, in which THE FATHER is said to have it, p. 117.

for, namely, That They give up *This Definition*, as the only way to *prevent Such An Inference*.----But this They cannot do, without Certain Destruction to Their Own Cause. Very True; Therefore say The Unitarians, we will *condemn Them out of Their own Mouths*. For at the same time, That They say, This is *A Just Definition of A Divine Person*, at the same time, and upon Their Own Definition, will we prove, That there is but ONE GOD, that is, as we have all along explained ourselves, *One Divine Hypostasis, Intelligent Agent or Person*. The Reason of *This* is evident, from what has been already suggested, namely, That as *Whatever Necessarily Exists and possesses All Divine Perfections* must, upon Those Principles, be GOD; so There can be but *One Such*, because *Wherever Eternity of Existence and Perfection of Nature center in Any One Individual*, there *Every Other, Every Second of That Kind*, is for ever Excluded.----*The Trinitarian Definition of THE DIVINE BEING and A DIVINE PERSON is Intirely The Same*, and therefore, if there be (as there certainly is) but ONE GOD, it follows even upon Their Own Reasoning, That there is but *One Divine Hypostasis or Person*.

THIS I might have introduced, as *An Argument* in favour of *The Comment upon The Text*, or *The Explication of The Term GOD*, under The First Branch of The Discourse. And, indeed, *A Very Strong and Pertinent Reason* it is. But notwithstanding I omitted it there, least I should have given umbrage to
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Some Over Smart, Critical Gentlemen, who might have been ready to have told me, it too much coincided with *My First Argument*; I could not think myself obliged to shut it intirely out: And tho' it stand at this distance from That part of The Subject, I hope, it will not come too late, to convince *My Brethren* of Their Gross Mistakes in The Doctrine of THE GODHEAD, and let Them see by *How Many Ways*, we have The Advantage against Them. Once More,

THIRDLY. A Farther Improvement upon This Occasion may be, That after what has been advanced, it is No Difficult Matter to see, not only upon *What Artifice* The *Trinitarian* Theory *subsists*; but also, thro' *What Door* it crept first into *The Church*.

THE Main Hinge upon which it turns, is No Other than, That *Running Distinction* of *Trinity in Unity*, and *Unity in Trinity*; that is, in other terms, *Three Persons and One God*, *One God and Three Persons*.---This is intirely *A Scholastic Sophism*,⁶ and, thro' *The Whirl of Expression*, makes Those who use it *So Giddy*, That They have No Opportunity to trace *That Maze of Error*, which is *Artfully* concealed under it. The Good People, truly, think Themselves sufficient Happy; *Pious, Orthodox Christians*, while they keep tight to THE DIVINE UNITY, and *stiffly assert*, That there is but ONE GOD: Never considering the lengths to which They run Themselves, by *The Doctrine* of *Three Persons*; nor Whether
That

⁶ See My Brother's Letter, before quoted, P. 7. *Marg. Note.*

That Part of The Scheme comports with *The Other*. It being certain, to A Demonstration, That, would They carefully enter into things, and examine even *The Trinitarian Definitions* only, They would see, Either, That they have THREE GODS in *These Three Persons*, Or Else, No GOD, but what subsists in *The Pure Divine Essence*: And therefore that *One Branch* of The System is *Contradictory* to, and, by consequence, subversive of *The Other*.

As to *The Rise* of *This Theory*, or *The Occasion* by which it was *first introduced*, it appears to have been *No Other*, than *A Fond Conceit*, That *The Grand Characters*, by which THE DIVINE BEING stands revealed in *Scripture*, which are *Those* of FATHER and SPIRIT, were designed to express *His Metaphysical Nature*, or *Modal Existence*: Whereas it is evident, beyond Contradiction, That, tho' the word *Spirit* very well represents *The Private Nature* of THE DIVINE BEING, and therefore may be included, as *An Idea* in *That Term*, yet, considering *Those Characters* in reference to *The Work of Salvation* (which is certainly *Their Grand Use and Intention in Scripture*) That They are rather designed to instruct us into *The Relation and Influence* of THE DIVINE BEING; What Capacity HE sustains, and What Work HE performs in *The Great Business of Our Recovery and Happiness*.----The same may be said as to THE MEDIATOR or SON.

AND were people as *Honest to avow These Principles*, as it is certain, They must be ready to take Them in (provided They make Any

Use of *Their Natural Senses*) we should find *All Scholastic Modes* of Explication *thrown aside*, and The Pure Doctrine of *Absolute Divine Unity*, upon *The Plain, Familiar Representations of Scripture*, Universally espoused.

FOURTHLY. THE Next Conclusion from Our Subject may be, That *The Admission* of The Doctrine of The Trinity, *in the present Scholastic Form of it*, is *No Way Necessary to Salvation*: From whence it will follow, That it is *No Fundamental in Christianity*: And from thence, again, That it is *Not of Such Importance*, as to be made *A Term of Communion*, notwithstanding *The Fondness* of Some Congregations in that particular.

I shall only undertake *The Proof of The First of These Assertions*, because the rest are so nearly connected with it, that if *That Part* of The Argument be established, *The Other* will follow by unavoidable consequence.

AND That *The Admission* of The Doctrine of The Trinity, in its *Present Scholastic Form*, is *No Way Necessary to Salvation*, will appear from what follows:

I. BECAUSE it is *No Where expressly revealed in Scripture*, The Sole Standard of *Religious Faith*, as well as Test of *Christian Behaviour*. We have *No such Account* of The Doctrine of The Godhead in *Revelation*, as *That* handed down to us by *The Schoolmen*, Namely, Of *Three Divine Persons* and *One Divine Essence*: Or in other words, *Three Persons eternally subsisting, and acting as Individuals, or Distinct Agents in Our Salvation*. The Scripture is an intire Stranger both to *The Principle itself*, and
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The Form of expreffion invented to explain it. It *No Where* enters *thus nicely* into The Difpute, nor afferts *fo roundly* concerning *The Divine Mode of Exiftence*.----But *Who* fees not, That had *The Doctrine* itfelf been *True*, and *Such A Particular Explication* of it *Necelfary* to *Salvation*; that is to fay, Had it been *An Effential* in *Christianity*; what we *muft have known* and *believed* as *An Absolute Qualification* for *Heaven*; that then *The Scriptures* of neceffity muft have been *exprefs* and *peremptory* in ftating the point.---*An ambiguous, equivocal Form* of expreffion in a matter of *this confequence*, would not only have been *dangerous to us*, but have *borne hard upon All The Perfections* of The Divine Author. Wherefore we conclude, with the higheft degree of Certainty, That forasmuch as THE DIVINE BEING himfelf has not been *particular* and *exprefs* in declaring *His Mode of Exiftence*; or, which is the fame thing, forasmuch as *The Scriptures* are *intirely filent* on this head, and know *Nothing* of *The Prefent Scholaftic Theory*, That therefore *The Admission* of it, in *That Form*, cannot be *A Necelfary Prerequisite* to *Salvation*. Again,

2. THIS farther appears, Becaufe *All The Saints* under *The Old Testament* Difpenfation, *The Patriarchs*, and *Antient Jews* efpecially, were admitted to heaven, without *Any Precife Intimations* of *This Kind*, *Any Explicit Inftitutions* in *This Way*.

THAT The Believing *Jews*, under The Former Difpenfation, were admitted to glory, I fuppofe, *None will difpute*: And That *they* muft have been faved without *Any Acquaintance*

with The Doctrine of The Trinity, in its *Present Mode* of Exhibition, will be as readily admitted by those, who are conversant with The Writings of *The Old Testament*.¹ Not, indeed, That *The Trinitarians* themselves pretend to say, there were *Any Clear* or *Positive Discoveries* of *This Sort*, till the times of CHRIST and *His Apostles*.----Here then The Argument is *This*: If it be fact, that *The Antient Jews* and *Patriarchs*, under The Former *Obscure Dispensation*, were brought to glory, without *Any Particular Acquaintance* with, and *Profession* of *The Present Doctrine* of The Trinity, *The Conclusion* is very *Easy* and *Natural*; namely, That *The Admission* of The Doctrine, in *The Form* in which it is *now presented*, is *No Way Necessary* to Salvation.----Not but for the sake of *inlarging The Argument*, we might farther reason after some such manner as this: If THE DIVINE BEING, even *without The Explicit Revelation* of *The New Testament*, under the more *General Discoveries* of Himself as *God, Father, and Spirit* (understood, at least by The Bulk of Mankind, in *A Natural Way* only) was sufficient to *convert* and *save*, under *The Former Dispensation*, how are we to imagine, That *His Wisdom* and *Power* are *contracted*; or, that *He is not Equal* to *The Same Purposes*, even *without The Metaphysical Distinctions* of *The Schools* (supposing Them Just) under *The Present*?²----If *The Jews* were saved *without This Doctrine*, I think, None, in their senses, will dispute *The Possibility* of it with respect to *Us*. But once more,

3. WITH-

¹ See Dr. WATTS's *Christ. Doctr.* &c. p. 2 & 4. ² *Ib.* p. 1, 2.

3. WITHOUT going so far back as *The Ancient Jews and Patriarchs*, we have an account of Some, under *The New Testament*, who were *Real Christians*, being treated as Persons of That Character by *The Apostle*, and therefore *Such* as could not possibly fail of Salvation, who, nevertheless, at the same time, *had not so much as heard of ONE of THE THREE DIVINE PERSONS*. Surprising, indeed, you will say! Read that passage in *The Acts of The Apostles*, and you will find, That the observation is well supported. It begins thus: *And it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus: And finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received THE HOLY GHOST since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard, whether there be any HOLY GHOST. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him, which should come after him, that is, on CHRIST JESUS. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of THE LORD JESUS. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, THE HOLY GHOST came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.³-----Now what think you of this history? Were They *Christians*, or not? The Text asserts it; giving this Testimony of them, *That they believed.*⁴ And that it was *A Faith* terminating on *The Right Object*, that is to say, on *THE LORD JESUS**

³ Ch. xix. 1—6. ⁴ ver. 2.

CHRIST,

CHRIST, as *The Person* whom *John* pointed to in his *Doctrine* and *Baptism*, is evident from the account given of this matter in the words following: *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying-----that they should believe on-----CHRIST JESUS.*⁵ Nay farther, to put this matter beyond all doubt, to convince us that they were *Real Believers*, in *The Gospel* sense of the word, *The Apostle* takes and *baptizes them* in the name of *THE LORD JESUS CHRIST*; thereby fully assuring us, that they had *That Faith, which is a necessary prerequisite to Water Baptism*. Astonishing! How can this be, will *A Modern Christian, A Trinitarian Believer* say? *That Person cannot believe in CHRIST; be a subject of Baptism; and be intituled to Glory, who does not hold, That there are Three Persons, FATHER, SON and SPIRIT, eternally subsisting in THE DIVINE ESSENCE.*-----But sparing This Bluster, This Surprise and Wonderment; Thus The Fact stands: *Believers They were*; being *acknowledged and treated as Such* by *The Apostle*, and therefore *heirs of heaven and happiness*: And all this, at the same time, That they had not so much as *heard*, whether there was any *HOLY GHOST*, or not. They were unacquainted with *The Name*, as well as strangers to *his miraculous power*.----Will any, after such *A Relation* as this, pretend to say, That *Trinitarianism* is *A Fundamental, An Essential* in Religion; of *Such Importance*, That persons are to be excluded *Communion here*, and have *the doors of heaven shut against them hereafter*, unless they receive and profess it in *The Present*

Scholastic Form?-----Those who are hardy enough for this, must be capable of imbibing the most palpable absurdities, and descending to the vilest methods of persecution.

SUCH an accession as this (so much am I disposed to oblige *My Brethren*, could I do it on any rational terms) I am very willing to make in The Controversy; I mean, That since it has pleased GOD, under *The New Testament* Dispensation, to reveal HIMSELF, in conjunction with THE MEDIATOR, under The Grand, Distinguishing Characters of FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, *All* that is truly *Theological*, really DIVINE in *That Doctrine*, has an undoubted claim upon our faith; ought to be admitted and professed by us; unless we are disposed to reject *Revelation*, and renounce our interest in the character of *Christians*.--- Upon this account, the circumstances of things with us are remarkably changed from what they were under *The Jewish Oeconomy*. That could not be exacted at their hands, with which they were not intrusted.---But since THE DIVINE BEING has made *An Advance* upon *Revelation*, and we are so happy, as to possess His *last* and *fullest* Discoveries, it is easy to see, *That our faith is to be regulated by This Standard*, and to *correspond with it*.---It is therefore *Only The Vain Philosophy of The Schools* on this head, which I am displeased with and reject, and not *The Sound Divinity of The Word*, in reference to FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, contriving and managing The Great Affair of Salvation. Here it will be asked, What is *This Sound Divinity*, you speak of? I answer, That
we

we not only know and acknowledge Those Two Great Personages, THE FATHER and SON; or ONE GOD and ONE MEDIATOR, as standing in *The Relations*, and discharging *The Works*, by which THEY are spoken of in *Scripture*; but, That we likewise depend upon This ONE GOD and ONE MEDIATOR, or which is the same for substance, upon GOD in CHRIST, for every thing necessary to *Present Comfort*, and *Everlasting Happiness*.---And when I have said this, it will be readily seen, that I design to secure to THEM all that Tribute of Praise, which arises to THE DIVINE and MEDIATORIAL BEINGS, from *Their Concerns* in The Work of Salvation: That GOD is to be regarded and honoured as A FATHER, with respect to *Grace*, and as A SPIRIT, with respect to *Power*; or as *The Source and Fountain of All Gracious Deliberations, Settlements and Influence*: And That THE SON is to be believed in and depended upon, as *The Only Medium of Access to, Communication from, and Acceptance with THE DIVINE MAJESTY*.---The Man, who *believes* these things *with his heart*, and makes *profession* of them *with his mouth*, to borrow *The Apostle's* expressions;⁶ whether he knows any thing of *The Schemes and Hypotheses of The Schools*, which, in the language of *Scripture*, are *The Inventions and Traditions of Men*, or not; I shall always be ready to account *A Christian*, and treat as *A Brother*: And shall think his right to *Communion* in this world, as just, and his title to *Heaven*, in the next, as valid, as that of *Another*, who can run thro' all

⁶ Rom. x. 9.

The Metaphysical Distinctions, by which *The Learned* have rather *puzzled*, than *explained*, *The Doctrine* of THE GODHEAD.⁷ Again,

FIFTHLY. I would observe, That the present account of THE DIVINE BEING, under the leading characters of FATHER and SPIRIT, *delivers us from All Those Difficulties* which clog *The Arian* and *Socinian Hypotheses*, as well as *The Trinitarian*.

As to *The Common Plan*, it is very well known, that THE SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST is there made *A Distinct, Self Existent, Unoriginated Being*; *Another Individual, Intelligent Agent*, possessing *His Divinity* in the same manner, as THE FATHER; by which means *The Doctrine is overcharged*, as it necessarily introduces or constitutes A SECOND GOD.

ON *The Other Schemes*, the case is just *The Reverse*: For THE SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST being considered by them, Either, *Only as A Property* of GODHEAD, Or else, as *A Mere Creature*, deriving His being as such from THE FATHER, and consequently *inferior in His Metaphysical Nature* to THE DIVINE MAJESTY; it is certain, He is as much *degraded*, being *infinitely sunk* below the accounts which we have of Him in *Revelation*.----These therefore are *Extremes* in *Those Systems*, which makes it so impossible either to *reconcile them with Truth*, or *accommodate them to Scripture*. But take *The Doctrine* in *The Present State* of it, and, I apprehend, all danger of *Excess*, on each hand, is effectually prevented.

IT is not more evident, That THE DIVINE BEING, or *First Cause*, is injured by the constitution

⁷ See Dr. WATTS's *Christ. Doctr. &c.* p. 12.

tution of *A Second or Third Equal*, than it is plain, That THE SPIRIT suffers in *His Nature and Capacity* by being placed in *the rank of Creatures*; whereas, considering THE SPIRIT or HOLY GHOST as THE SAME DIVINE BEING with THE FATHER, only under *Another Form of Exhibition, An Advance in The Divine Manifestations*, SPIRIT expressing His *Power and Influence*, as FATHER does *His Relation and Grace*, The Difficulty, on all sides, immediately vanishes.

I NOT only know, That *The Trinitarians* are exceedingly put to it with *Their Doctrine of Three Distinct Persons, Three Divine Hypostases or Equals*; that such objections lie against *Their Scheme*, as *All Their Distinctions* can never help them over; but That the case presses as hard upon *The Unitarians of The Arian and Socinian Hypotheses*. When *These* read in *The New Testament*, that OUR LORD was not only conducted and managed by THE SPIRIT in His Life; but qualified for, and carried thro' His Obedience and Death by HIM (not to say, That *His Sufferings* received *their value* from this quarter) That *The Apostles* derived their *intire Capacity and Furniture*, both for their ministry, and miracles, from THE SPIRIT; That HE bears The Same Divine Titles, stands distinguished by The Same Divine Works, and possesses interest in The Same Divine Worship, as THE FATHER; I am sensible, They are, and must be at a loss for *A Thro', Consistent Interpretation*: And that They are obliged to *besitate* in some cases; to *torture Scripture* in others, and *take shelter*, at last, under *Various* and

and *Doubtful Readings*.----This trouble is all struck off upon *The Present System*, with respect to THE SPIRIT: And I hope matters will appear with equal advantage to THE MEDIATORIAL BEING, should I survive *Another Year*, to present the public with my sentiments on that part of The Controversy. Once more, and to conclude,

SIXTHLY. WHAT has been delivered on this subject may give us Some Light into The Doctrine of *Satisfaction*, *Reconciliation* or *Atonement*, (call it as you please) with respect to *The Object* of it; or lead us into *That Particular View*, which it is more immediately necessary, we should have of THE DIVINE BEING, with regard to *That Article* of Faith.

NOTHING is more ridiculous, than *The Common Notion* of *One Divine Person* obeying and suffering to make *Satisfaction* or *Atonement* to *Another Divine Person*; because in this case, *The Person who gives, has the same claim with him, who receives*.---Neither does it seem so familiar or natural to speak of CHRIST as offering Himself A Sacrifice to THE FATHER (especially if you do not suppose, *The Character* in such an application intirely restrained to *Natural Relation*) because the love and tenderness, included in *That Term*, seem to forbid it; or, at least, render the view of it *less amiable* and *pleasing*.---Neither are we to consider THE DIVINE BEING, as A SPIRIT, so immediately or properly The Object of *Satisfaction*; because under *That Character*, HE is rather to be regarded as *The Person*, who *sanctifies* for, *supports* under, and *adds weight* to The Death

of CHRIST.----It remains then only, That we consider THE DIVINE BEING, with respect to this work, under *His Simple Character of Natural Relation*, which is *That of God*. This is *The First, The Original Relation*, which we stand in to THE DIVINE BEING, and what places HIM at *The Greatest Remove* from us ; because we look upon HIM here, *only in A Natural Capacity*, the most simple and distant of that sort ; as *giving Laws* to those, whom HE had *created*, and *exacting Satisfaction* for those, who had *transgressed*. Wherefore, This, methinks, seems *the properest light, the next immediate character*, in which we are to contemplate THE DIVINE BEING, in *taking Satisfaction* at the hands of HIS SON.----And we shall find, if we examine *Revelation* on this head, That this is *the most usual*, if not *the only view*, in which it is exhibited to us. Thus we read of CHRIST's *offering Himself without spot unto God*.⁸ And when OUR LORD was upon the cross, in the sharpest part of His conflict, HE addresses THE DIVINE BEING under *This Character*, and not under *That of FATHER*, saying, MY GOD, MY GOD, *why hast THOU forsaken ME* ?----For it is to be observed, That HE was HIS GOD, as well as HIS FATHER ; and That not *barely by Nature*, as *The Source of His Being* ; but likewise by *Obligations* to HIM, both on *His Own*, and *His People's account* : Tho' here *The Obligation* immediately turns on the foot of relation to *The Church*, in whose room HE was now suffering.---And then it may be farther observed,

in

⁸ Heb. ix. 14.

⁹ Matt. xxvii. 46. & Mark xv. 34.

in Agreement with This Principle, That we read of GOD's *reconciling us to HIMSELF by the death of HIS SON*:¹ And of *our being reconciled to GOD*.² And so GOD is said to *set forth HIS SON to be A Propitiation* for sin:³ And to *commend His Love* to us in the gift of HIM;⁴ Or as *The Evangelist* expresses it: So, *b. e.* in such A Superlative, Distinguishing Way, *to have loved the world, as to have given His only begotten SON*. The reason of which appears to be this (I mean that, which puts *An Accent, or Emphasis* upon *The Love* of GOD) That THE DIVINE BEING, considered purely in *His Natural Relation*, that, which is most *simple in itself*, and *distant from us*; and therefore as The Person *immediately offended* under *That Character*, and to whom it intirely belonged, either to have punished sin in *The Transgressors themselves*, or accept of *A Substitute*: That this DIVINE BEING, as GOD, under *His Natural Character of Absolute Dominion*, would not only condescend to *pardon sin*, but would also *provide A Ransom* for us HIMSELF; and that no other than HIS OWN SON, HIS dearly beloved SON; that HE would even surrender HIM to be *made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in HIM*:⁵ What can possibly open *A Fuller View of The Divine Love*, or more indear THE DIVINE BEING to His People, than *Such A Reflection as This!*

THIS Observation recommends itself to me, because it seems, I think, in some measure, to relieve

¹ 2 Cor. v. 18—20.

² Rom. v. 10.

³ Ib. Ch. iii. 25.

⁴ Ib. Ch. v. 8. Compared with John iii. 16.

⁵ 2 Cor. v. 21.

relieve the doctrine of *Satisfaction*. It surely sets it at *greater liberty*; gives the argument its *full scope*, and enables us to conceive of it more *clearly*, and *consistently*, than we can in the *common way*; where it seems to *come forward at once*, in *buddle and confusion*, before we are, in the least, prepared for it.

AND, indeed, it were to be wished, That we were more careful in *distinguishing The Divine Titles or Characters*, and in *examining The Particular Attributions* which are made to *Each of Them*. What I design is, *The Particular Subjects* upon which They are introduced, and *The Respective Arguments*, with which they are *severally* connected. For, how lightly soever we may think of it, at present, I cannot but suspect, That there is *more Spiritual Contrivance* laid up in *The Divine Titles*, and *Their Particular Applications*, than the generality of Christians have hitherto imagined.--- It is not in vain, that THE DIVINE BEING stands described in *Revelation* by *A Variety of Characters*. For besides that They express *The Glorious Foecundity and Exuberance of His Own Nature*; They likewise instruct us into *His Infinite Suitableness and Sufficiency to All Our Circumstances*, both in *Nature and Grace*.--- We may, probably, be tempted to treat *This Reflection* with contempt at first; but this I will venture to say, That God does not *fasten upon Expressions*, and *throw them out*, with as little *Design and Meaning*, as, it must be confessed, men frequently do. There is not only something *Peculiar*, in *The Structure and Composition*

position of Every Character, which THE DIVINE BEING has assumed; but something in Each peculiarly Proper and significant, according to The Place in which it stands, and The Occasion upon which it is used. And it is only Our Want of Spiritual Vision, which makes us so blind to The Beauty and Force of this part of The Divine Oracles. It would certainly be of no little service to Truth, particularly with regard to some of The Greatest Doctrines, if This Argument was considered at large: The Divine Titles ranged in Their Order; that so we might see The Propriety of Each; The Advance which One makes upon Another; and Their Expressiveness or Significance both in Natural and Revealed Religion.

THIS, I apprehend, is particularly the case in *The Observation* before us; because by confining our views of *Satisfaction*, to *This Express Image or Character* of THE DIVINE BEING; taking A Prospect of HIM in HIS pure simple Character of *Natural Relation*; why, we see *The Basis*, upon which *Satisfaction* is founded; *The Order* in which it rises, and, in one word, *The Beauty and Necessity* of it.

ALL the improvement which I have farther to make of this head, in conjunction with other parts of *The Discourse*, will be confined to This Single Inquiry: Why may not THE SAME DIVINE BEING, who stands described by Two Grand, Distinguishing Characters (not to say how many more) in *Nature*, which are *Those* of GOD and FATHER; likewise

wise stand described by *The Same Number of Titles in Grace*, namely *Those of FATHER and SPIRIT*: Since *Creative Power and Goodness*, which are *The Leading Ideas* included in *FATHER and SPIRIT*, are neither more nor less, than *The Same Attributions*, which belong to *THE ONE GOD in The Religion of Nature?*

T H E E N D.

